

## About the Author

Kurt Jarvis holds his B.A. degree from Asbury College and his M.A. degree in Education from Rowan University. He has had over fifty years direct experience in children's ministry at both the national and local level as well as with international with various Christian organizations and missions and has conducted international training activities and children's rallies in over 20 countries worldwide.

In 2008 Kurt founded CBS4Kids, a non profit international training ministry for pastors, teachers and other children's workers under American Ministry Support, [www.AMSUSA.org](http://www.AMSUSA.org).

For other resources on the CBS4Kids approach to teaching and telling the Story of God go to [www.CBS4Kids.org](http://www.CBS4Kids.org)

# The Chronological Story of God



## 60 Stories

**For  
Parents, Teachers, and Children's Workers**

m. k. Jarvis

# Acknowledgements

Many thanks go to the hundreds of colleagues, family, friends and ministry partners who have been a major source of encouragement and inspiration over a lifetime of ministry. To my life partner and wife, Judy, who has often released me so that I could follow God's call in world-wide fields of harvest, to my ministry colleagues who have partnered with me to teach children and train children's workers around the globe about Jesus Christ and His Word - thank you!

Many additional thanks to the hundreds of others who have faithfully prayed for me and have contributed from their own storehouses to fund international training activities. These are all part of this story...His story.

A long time ministry colleague once said, "*The urgency of the King's business requires haste.*" There is urgency in telling the story of God that sadly has been lost by many of God's leaders and workers. Many have succumbed to the ever increasing pace of daily life that has crowded out the urgency of taking the Gospel to a lost world. We must never lose sight of the urgency of the King's business; we must all have and maintain a sense of urgency to tell His story.

Special thanks to *The Chronological Bible Storying* leaders, Dr. J.O. Terry and Mr. Blair Faulk, who have developed the approach of telling and teaching the story of God through this unique method and whose work has inspired me to creatively consider an adaptation of that method for children and this volume for families.

And lastly, thank you to Joseph Burchill, Pastor Adult Education at Lancaster Alliance Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Marion Jean Grant, missionary with BCM International, Canada, both very long ministry colleagues and friends who have been a constant encouragement to me as I have pursued following God's call.

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**The Family Bible Storying Devotional**

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**For resources on the CBS4Kids approach to teaching and telling the Story of God go to [www.CBS4Kids.org](http://www.CBS4Kids.org)**

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# Forward

## The rise of biblical illiteracy in America

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., the ninth president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary wrote in 2005 regarding the issue of biblical illiteracy, “ Researchers George Gallup and Jim Castelli put the problem squarely: ‘Americans revere the Bible--but, by and large, they don't read it. And because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates.’ Researchers tell us that it's worse than most could imagine.

- Fewer than half of all adults can name the four gospels.
- Many Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples.
- According to data from the Barna Research Group, 60 percent of Americans can't name even five of the Ten Commandments. ‘No wonder people break the Ten Commandments all the time. They don't know what they are,” said George Barna, president of the firm. The bottom line? ‘Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate.”
- 82 percent of Americans believe "God helps those who help themselves" is a Bible verse
- 12 percent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife
- A survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 percent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife
- A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham

Almost four decades ago the American culture was introduced to a revolutionary realm of science fiction as hordes of movie goers sat through the new film Star Wars. Those of us who had that big screen opportunity first hand, or via DVD at home since, can relate to this film phenomena and can hardly forget the special effects and characters that came alive on the cinema screen.

One scene in particular was unforgettable. In the midst of human crisis the R2D2 robot projected a message from a three dimensional holograph figure of Princess Leia. Under siege, the Federation was seeking their own type of savior, that infamous Jedi Knight, Obi-Wan Kenobi. Obi-Wan, the warrior who could save the people under attack and annihilation from the forces of evil led by Darth Vader, leader of the dark side.

Princess Leia sent the plea, “Obi-Won Kenobie, you’re our only hope....”

This one line is a vivid reminder of a similar fate our world is facing today, the need of an only hope for a better society, a better world, hope for a better future, and rescue from a dark side of mankind. Those of us who know the message of the Bible, know where that hope lies. But we are living today in a world where the “dark side’ would have us forget God, forget His Word and soon forget the principles of living that are embodied in those sacred writings.

Many thousands of years ago a similar scenario was played out. Review with me the words from the book of Judges, chapter 2, verse 10: *“After a whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel. The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord.”*

The struggle between good and evil has been present even before recorded history and the creation of the world. We read that this struggle and conflict existed long before creation in the heavenlies when war broke out between Satan and his angel followers and God Himself. That story alone would be sufficient for a remake of Star Wars with special effects that could also mesmerize audiences.

The world remains in jeopardy with a generation that will *“know neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel.”* And the result will be similar, *“The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord.”*

Without a moral compass the world indeed is doomed to a falling away from biblical principles of living. Is there any doubt that there is a need and urgency for telling the biblical story?

Perhaps we need a beautiful princess created in a three dimensional holograph DVD that we can send to every household. As the holograph appears, the princess quietly whispers, “Please someone, go tell and teach the biblical story, it is our only hope.”

## Kurt Jarvis

# Understanding Bible Storying

Bible storying is a way of learning the story of God in a chronological sequence so that the complete story of God is understood from the very youngest child to the adult.

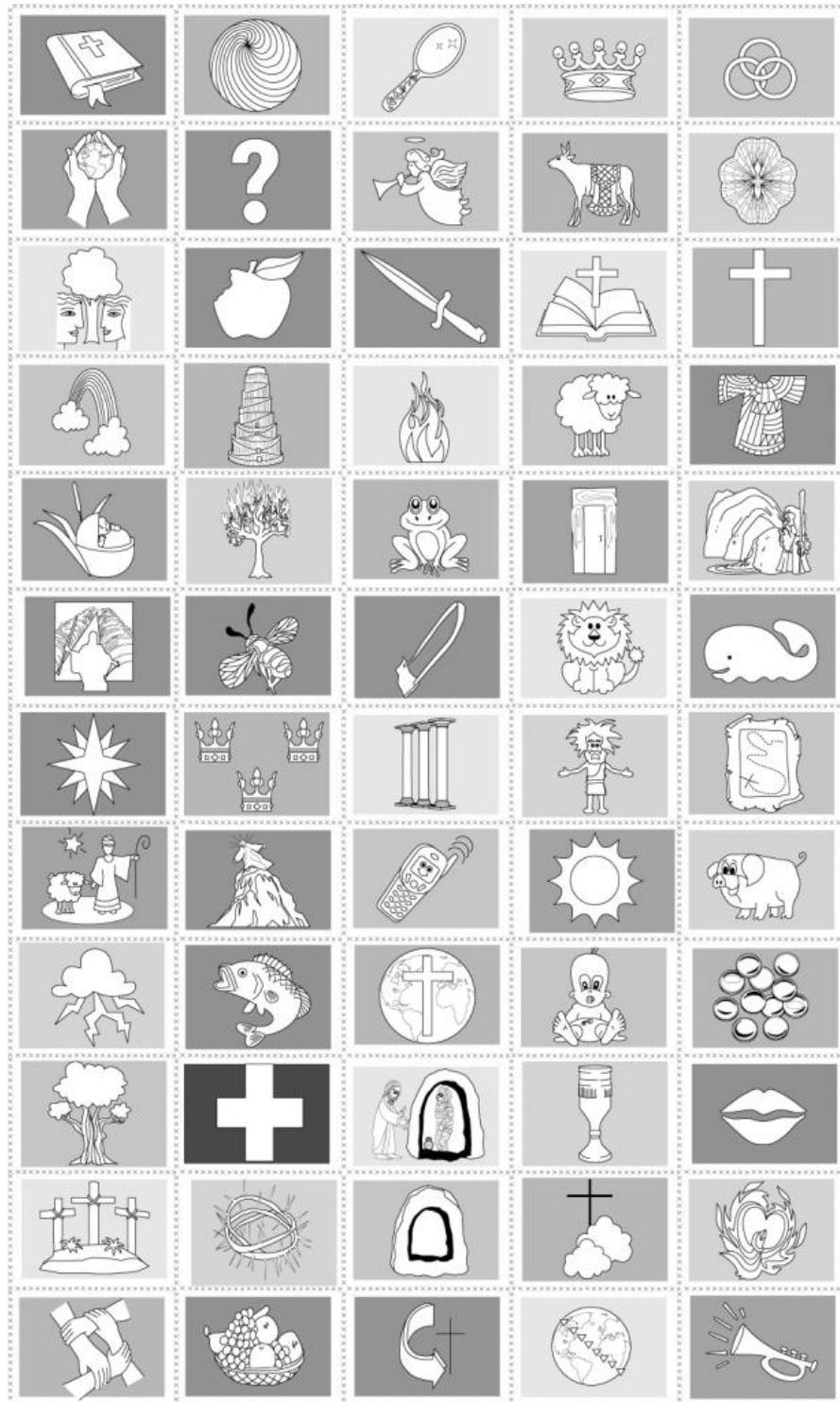
CBS4Kids has developed this chronological approach using 60 basic stories of the Bible to help the reader or listener gain a solid overview of the story of God. The following storying chart provides the sequential layout for the stories in this family devotional beginning in the upper left of the chart with the Bible as a Special Book and moving across to the right and down, left to right, to the bottom right corner with the story of Last Things.

A unique feature of this storying approach is that the first vertical column provides the broadest stories of the Bible in a chronological sequence and each subsequent vertical column to the right fill in gaps between the first vertical column and 12 rows. An alternate to using this devotional, especially if children in the family are mostly younger, is to selectively decide how many stories to the right in each column you want to include. By just using selected stories you can left to right and down and across each row and the chronology remains intact. As you move farther to the right in each horizontal row the stories go deeper into the Story of God.

With this approach, if a parent wants to skip any of the stories, as long as readings are completed left to right and down row by row, the chronology of the Story of God remains in sequence. This chronological devotional has an accompanying fabric symbol panel and several activities that can be used by parents or teachers along with this devotional to learn the story of God in a chronological sequence.



# The Bible Story Symbols



# The Bible Stories

The Bible is a Special Book	Who is God?	What is God Like?	The Bible Changes Lives King Josiah	The Three Persons of God
Creation	Who is Satan	What are Angels?	False Philosophies	How Everything Began
Adam and Eve	Sin Enters the World	Cain and Abel	A Messiah is Prophesied	God's Plan For Mankind
Noah and God's Promises	The Tower of Babel	Sodom and Gomorrah	Abraham's Faith	Joseph and His Brothers
Baby Moses is Protected by God	Moses is Called	Pharaoh and the Plagues	The Passover	God Provides for His People
Israelites Cross the Red Sea	Joshua leads The Promised Land	David and Goliath	Daniel Trusts God	Jonah Disobeys God
Jesus is Born	The Visit of the Magi	Jesus in the Temple	Jesus is Baptized by John	Jesus begins His ministry
Jesus the Good Shepherd	Jesus is tempted by Satan	Jesus Calls His Disciples	The Parable of the Sower and the Seed	The Parable of the Prodigal Son
The Winds and the Sea Obey Jesus	Jesus Feeds 5000	Jesus Has Power Over Evil	Being Born Again - Nicodemus	The Rich Young Ruler
Zacchaeus Meets Jesus	The Good Samaritan	Jesus Has Power Over Death	The Last Supper	Jesus is Betrayed
Jesus Prepares to Die for Us	Jesus is Crucified	Jesus is Risen	Jesus Ascends & Gives the Great Commission	The Holy Spirit Comes
Becoming Part of Gods Family	The Fruit of the Spirit	Saul Becomes a Believer	Early Christians Tell Others About Jesus	Last things Heaven - Revelation

# Chronological Bible Storying

*“In the beginning...”* and so the story of God unfolds. This story, which is all that is contained in the Bible and is displayed in all of creation, is the meaning and essence of all life. It is this story that reveals the meaning of birth, life, death and eternity – all that ever was, is, and will be for all time to come.

The methods of telling this story have evolved over time. From the simple oral traditions and hand written scrolls of the beginning of recorded history through the modern technology of multi media and interactive teaching methods, the story of God is told and retold. The essence, however, is not in the method, but the message. The results or the impact of the communication in the hearts and lives of the listener can only determine effective communication of the story of God. It must be told and taught with the ultimate goal of life change or teachers will have missed the mark.

Education and technology within a culture often determine

the methodology. Unless the learner receives and processes the message through creative methodology, the results are uncertain. There must be a clear strategy to tell and preserve the essence of the story using a variety of teaching methods.

As people learn that story, it is important that it is learned in a chronology or sequence so that people of all ages can understand the connections from one biblical event to the next. That chronology or sequence defines God and the evolvment of man's relationship to God through the years. Understanding how all the events are chronologically connected enables the individual to better understand the reason and meaning for the Gospel, which means understanding the importance of knowing and having a personal relationship with God.

Without that chronology the Bible could be viewed as a series of unrelated events that does not give the complete story. While each story in itself has a spiritual lesson and merit, it is through the chronology of the story that the full purposes of God for mankind are revealed.

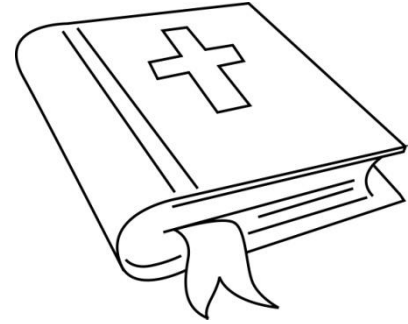
Chronological storying is a building block process. Each

story reveals more and more of God, His nature, His love and His invitation for all people, young and old, to know Him.

Parents and teachers may wish to add additional stories into this storying approach. Always try to add stories within the chronology. Make sure you verify the biblical B.C. / A.D. date of stories and remember that the typical Bible layout does not necessarily follow a chronological sequence of stories and events.

# The Bible is a Special Book

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 3:16



Books have been written for a very long time; actually machines have printed them now for over 500 years.

Before that, time books were hand written and hand copied so there were very few books. Today there are millions and millions of books, maybe even trillions. Some books are fiction, which are made up stories. Other stories are true and might be stories about people, places, and history. Some books, like math books, are written for learning.

But one book, the Bible, is such a special book and different from any other book ever written. There are two parts of the Bible, the Old Testament, which is the history of the beginning of the earth and is the story of God's people and the New Testament which is about the life of Jesus, the beginning of the Christian church and a description of heaven, the end of this world and the new world to come.

There are 66 small books in the Bible and those 66 books make up the entire Bible. God used 40 different men to

write the books of the entire Bible. These men did not all live at the same time and it took 1,600 years for the entire Bible to be written. Even though some of these writers lived hundreds of years before another writer, in many places in the Bible something a person wrote and said was going to happen in the future, came true hundreds of years later. That was proof of something very special about this book, the Bible, because only God could know that something He said was going to happen, would happen. (2 Peter 1:20, 21)

Of all the books of the trillions of books ever written, they were all written by a person except for one book. That one book is the Bible. God wrote the Bible and was the real author of that book. Before the printing press was invented the Bible was written down by hand and copied over and over. Every word was checked and rechecked to make sure the words never changed.

There are many other religious books, but this book is different. Some men who wrote other religious book had ideas about God and wrote down their ideas, but they were just their ideas and thoughts. But the Bible is God telling us about Himself, about His Son, Jesus, and about the Holy Spirit, which is also part of God. So, God is really the writer

of the Bible.

The Bible is how God talks to us today. It tells the story of how God created the entire world, the seas, mountains, tress, birds, animals and most of all, people. And, the Bible tells us how we are special creations of God, each man, woman and child. God made us different from all other creation because God had a special purpose and plan for us.

And most of all, the Story of God, the Bible, is the story of how much God loves us, each one of us, no matter what country we live in, the color of our skin, the kind of house we live in; God loves each one of us exactly the same. How do we know all this? Because that is exactly what the Bible tells us.

### **Questions and discussion:**

Find in your Bible 2 Timothy 3:16. What does this verse tell you about how the Bible was written?

Find in your Bible 2 Peter 1: 20, 21. What do these verses tell you about prophecy, things that were written hundreds of years before they happened?

Find in the Old Testament of the Bible Micah 5:2. This was

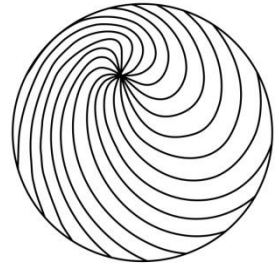


written 750 years before Jesus was born. What does this verse say?

- Who wrote all the books ever written except one book?
- What makes the Bible different from all other books ever written?
- Who wrote the Bible?
- How does God talk to us today?

# Who is God?

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1



From the very beginning of books and writing people have wondered who made the world and universe. In the very beginning Adam and Eve and their children knew all about how the world was made because they knew God and talked directly with Him. Then many years later God did not talk directly to people any more but God used certain men and women to tell people about Him. These people who spoke for God were called prophets and they told people about God and how He wanted them to live.

But some people no longer wanted to listen to what God said or follow God, so they made up their own ideas about God, how to live and about the world. People soon forgot about God and came up with all sorts of ideas as to how the world was made. Then, when people began to write, people wrote those ideas down. But just because they were written down it did not make those ideas true. Soon many people began to believe the things that were written about God and who He was and how the world was made even though

those ideas were wrong.

Some people had an idea that the world was flat, like a pancake. They wrote down that idea and for many years people believed the world was flat. Other people thought the earth was the center of the universe and that the sun and moon and stars moved around the earth. They wrote those ideas down and some people believed that for many years but that also was not true. Today we know that the sun is in one place and the planets and stars move around the sun.

Some people did not believe that God created the world but believed the world and universe just happened, that one minute there was nothing and then all of a sudden everything appeared. Many people believed that too. But just because people believe something does not make it true.

The Bible tells us that it is God who made everything. The Bible tells us many things about God and that is how we know about Him, what He is like, where He lives and how He wants us to know more about Him. We know that God made the trees, the flowers, the sun and the moon and

stars, the birds, the fish in the sea, and the animals. And we also know that it was God who made us as a very special part of all of creation.

We cannot see God today but God still talks to use through His Word, the Bible. And we can know God today because we can pray and talk to Him. We can know a lot about Him because we have the Bible and we can see what He has made all around us.

There is a verse in the Bible in the book of Romans, Chapter 1, verse 20 that says since the very beginning of the world the things of God are clearly seen through all that He has made, God's power, who He is, and that fact that He is God. No one can make a tree, or a flower or a fish or an animal. Only God can do that and that is just one thing we know about God.

Most of all, we know that God not only made everything, but we know that God created us and He loves us. Just like the air, we can feel the air and we know it is there but we cannot see it. God is also everywhere even though we cannot see Him. The Bible tells us so much about God. It tells us if we love God and believe in Him that one day we

will be with Him in heaven too.

**Questions and discussion:**

- What tells us about God?
- Who made everything?
- Can we see God?
- How do we know God is true?

# What is God Like?

**Scripture:** The Book of Psalms



Did you ever hear someone describe a person you had never met? You might have a relative that lives far away and you hear family members mention that person, talk about what they do, about their personality such as they have a great sense of humor or they are grumpy, etc. You never met that person but from what others say you begin to have a picture in your mind what they are like. Then a time comes and you meet that person and they might be much different that what you thought. Maybe you thought they had black hair and you meet them and they have red or blonde hair.

God is much like that. We really do not know what He looks like because the only part of God people ever saw was Jesus. But the Bible does tell us so much about God that we really do not have to know what God looks like. We already know everything we need to know about Him from what the Bible tells us.

The entire Bible is the story of God. In every book we can learn more and more about what God is like. The book of Psalms is in the middle of the Bible and was written by many different people who all describe God. In this part of the Bible we see what God is like:

- **Holy** – In Psalm 111:9 it says, “Holy and awesome is His name.” This means God is perfect and no one is perfect except God.
- **Love** – Psalm 118:1 says that God’s love will last forever: Some people can love someone today and not love him or her tomorrow. But the Bible tells us that God cannot ever stop loving us no matter what we do.
- **Faithful** – Psalm 33:4 says that God will do what He says He will do. That is being faithful. God is always faithful to us to do everything in His Word that He promises He will do.
- **Present everywhere** – Psalm 139:8 If we could go to heaven God would be there and if we could go the most bottom part of the sea God would be there too. God is everywhere. He is with us no matter where we go or what we do.
- **All Powerful** – Psalm 147: 5 says great is mighty in power. There is nothing that God cannot do. God created and made everything and He has the power of everything.
- **Unchanging** – Psalm 136:1 says that God’s love to us never changes. God loves us today and He will love us tomorrow and for all days to come. We should be thankful to God because His love for us never stops.
- **Good** – Psalm 34:8 says, “*Taste and see that the*

*Lord is good.*” God is kind. We know that no one is born good or perfect. There are times when we all do things that are not good for ourselves or for others. But Psalm 34:8 reminds us that God is always good. He is always good to us.

- **Just** – Psalm 111:7 says that what God does is just and that means He is always fair. God doesn’t “get even.”
- **God knows everything** – In Psalm 139: 1-4 it describes how God knows everything about us. He knows what we think, He knows when we are working or playing, He knows what we are going to say even before we say something. Because God knows us He also knows how to help us with whatever we need.
- **Forever** - Psalm 9:7 says the Lord is forever: There is no end to God and there was no beginning. God created time for us but with God there is no time. Forever means there will be no ending. People who know and love God will be with Him forever.

When we want to remember some of these things, here is a way we can remember some of what God is like because God made us in His image.

**Head-** God knows everything.

**Eyes-** God sees everything.

**Arm / muscle-** God is all-powerful.



**Mouth-** God is good and kind to us.

**Heart –** God is loving.

**Hand –** God is fair.

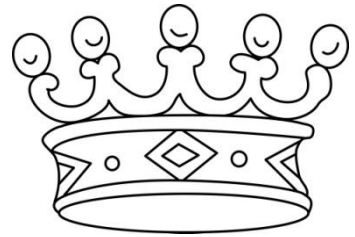
**Knee-** We bow our knees to God because He is holy.

**Foot –** God is everywhere. There is no place on this earth that we can go that God is not with us.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- Review what God is like by going through the parts of your body.
- The book of Psalms is a collection of songs and poems; develop your own poem or song about God that describes what He is like.

# The Bible Changes Lives



**Scripture:** 2 Kings 22:1 – 23:25

In the Old Testament of the Bible there is a story about a boy named Josiah who became King of God's people when he was eight years old. He loved God very much and wanted to please God. Most of the people, however, did not love God and had forgotten all about Him.

King Josiah saw that the Temple, the special place where God's people came to worship Him, was falling apart and being used to worship idols. One day, when Josiah was twenty-six years old, he sent the royal secretary to the Temple to talk to the high priest about rebuilding the temple. As they began fixing up the Temple, the priest found a copy of the Bible scriptures, which had been put away many years before. These Bible scriptures contained the law; the 10 commandments and other things God had given them, which told them how to live to please God.

No one had read these scriptures for a long, long time. The high priest said, "*I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord*". (The Bible scriptures in the Temple) The royal secretary took the Bible scriptures back to King Josiah and said, "*The priest has given me a book.*"

King Josiah asked the secretary to read the scripture scroll. When the secretary read the Bible scriptures to the King and the King

heard God's words read to him, he became very sad because he realized that the people were not living in a way that pleased God. He cried and ripped his clothing, which in Bible times meant he was very sorry for what had happened. The King gave orders to the priest and a few other people, and for the first time in a long while they prayed to God and asked Him what they should do. Then the priest went to the house of Huldah the prophetess and told her what had happened. God had told Huldah how He felt about His people and what He was going to do to them in the future because they had disobeyed Him and disobeyed His laws.

God said that He was very unhappy because the people had ignored God's teaching in the Bible scriptures, and that He was going to punish them. God also said that King Josiah would not be punished because Josiah had listened to the words of the Bible scriptures and was doing what they said.

When King Josiah heard this he was very sad for his people and made a plan of action to help everyone hear the Bible scriptures and do what it says. First he gathered all of the leaders of the nation together. Then they called all of the people to the Temple and King Josiah read the words of God to them.

Right then and there King Josiah and all the people made a promise that they would obey all of God's commands. They went into the Temple, God's special place, and removed everyone and everything that wasn't supposed to be there. Then they went all throughout their country and tore down statues and idols that were

used to worship false gods. Next they destroyed all the places that had been built to worship false gods. They also got rid of the disobedient priests that were leading the people away from God.

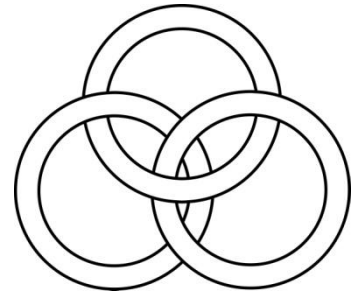
Lives were changed, from the King right down to the every day person, because they read the Bible scriptures. The whole country once again knew the truth about God and began worshipping Him as they were supposed to.

All of this happened because King Josiah read the Bible scriptures and he, in turn, read it to all the people. The Bible tells us how God wants us to live and when we read and obey the words of God, it changes our lives.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- How old was King Josiah when he became King?
- How old was he when the royal secretary brought him the Bible?
- What do you think will happen to us if we don't read the Bible for a long time?
- What happened when God's people read and obeyed the Bible?
- What do you think will happen if we start reading and obeying the Bible?

# The Three Personalities of God



**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1-2; John 1:1-3, 13;  
Deuteronomy 6:

Did you ever go to a play where someone you knew was an actor or an actress? When they were in the play they might have played the part of a king or a queen or maybe a farmer or a scientist. They might have even worn a costume for the play, which made them look very different. But even though they looked different, you knew who they really were.

The Bible tells us that God has three parts but all the parts are the same. That is not easy to understand. But we do know there is God the Father, then we all know about Jesus who lived two thousand years ago and was God's Son and is also God. Then we read in the Bible about the Holy Spirit which is the way God is part of us today.

In the beginning when the world was created, the three parts of God were there. There was God the father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. All three parts of God created everything. They created the earth that we live on, the air that we breathe, the sun, moon and stars, and even the first two humans.

In the very beginning of the Bible, Moses, the leader of God's people, wrote something very interesting about God. (Tell or recite

Genesis 1:1.) The first verse of the Bible says that God created the heavens and the earth. The second verse of the Bible says something very interesting. (Tell or recite Genesis 1:2.) This tells us that the Spirit of God was there too, moving over the surface of the earth.

The first two verses of the Bible show God and the Holy Spirit of God as two distinct parts of God, and both were there during the creation of the world. Many thousand years later the apostle John wrote in the book of the Bible God told him to write, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. The Word was with God in the beginning.”* The apostle John goes on to write in the next part of his book of the New Testament, *“Through Him all things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.”* All Bible teachers and experts agree that this Bible writing in the book of John talks about the Word being Jesus, the only Son of God.

This part of John’s story reminds us that Jesus was also part of creation. The first verse of the book of John says that Jesus already existed at the beginning of time as we know it. It also says that He was with God in the beginning. Then it says that He *WAS* God.

The third verse of the book of John says that Jesus was part of creating the world and the heavens. So God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were all present and were part of creating the world.

When we see a globe of the world or a picture of the universe, we

can be reminded that all three parts of God were involved in creating not only this world, but everything in the universe as well. Does this mean that there are three Gods? Absolutely Not! In the book of Deuteronomy it tells us in chapter 6, verse 4. “*Listen, Israel, The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!*” He is one God existing in three Persons who worked together to create the universe.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- Who created the world?
- Are there several Gods, or just one true God?
- Is God the Father God? Is Jesus God? Is the Holy Spirit God?
- Does that mean there are three Gods? (No! There is one God who exists in three Persons.)
- Can you think of any examples of things that are three distinct parts, but they are still one object? (All illustrations fall short, but some are helpful to the mind of a child: the egg, the three states of water, the sun itself, light from the sun, heat from the sun, etc.)

# Creation

**Scripture:**      Genesis 1      Psalm 90:4  
                         2 Peter 3:8



People have different ideas as to how the world began. Some things about creation remain a mystery. We know that dinosaurs lived at one time because we find their bones and you can see their skeletons in museums. Science does not know why the dinosaurs all died. There are many ideas about what happened but no one knows for sure. When people do not know for sure what happened in the past or what might happen in the future, they sometimes make up stories and write those ideas in books. But that does not make those ideas true.

Even the Bible does not tell us everything about the past. But there are many things the Bible does tell us and that information is true. We know it is true because over many years the Bible has been proven to be true in everything that is written in it. There is nothing written in the Bible that anyone has been able to prove is not true.

But there are many books where people wrote about things from the past that today we have found were not true. For example, at one time people wrote in books that you could go to the country of China if you just sailed west on the sea from England or Spain. Then a man named Christopher Columbus tried to do that but instead of China he found America and America was only part way west going toward China. It was a great discovery and that discovery proved



that what had been written before was not true.

The Bible tells us many things that are true and one of the things the Bible tells us is about the very beginning of the earth and the universe. It even tells us about the beginning of time and day and night. The Bible also tells us how special we are to God.

The Bible tells us that God was there before He created the world, the moon, the sun and the stars. God was there even before He created time for people on the earth. The Bible also tells us that with God one day is just like 1000 years and 1000 years is just like one day. We live in a world that has day and night and seasons, and time. But God was there before all of this was created. God even created time.

We call the sun, the moon, and planets and stars that we can see part of the universe. Earth is part of the universe too. The universe is so big we have no idea even how big it is because we cannot see the end of the universe. We do know that there are millions and millions of miles between the earth and stars and planets. The entire universe is so large it cannot be measured. Most important, it is wonderful to know that God is even larger than the entire universe.

The Bible tells us God created everything. He created light and darkness. He created the dry ground and the oceans. He created the mountains and the rivers and streams. He created the grass and trees and flowers. God created the birds and animals and even

the smallest insect. God created all the fascinating creatures in the sea. There is nothing that you can see that God did not create.

When God created days and nights He created the week, seven days; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. God also said that after He created the entire universe, the earth, days and night and all things He took one day to rest and to look over everything He had created. The Bible tells us God rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day and He looked over everything He had made and said to Himself, "*This is good.*" God was very happy with all He had made. God also created one day each week for us to rest and worship too. That day is called the Sabbath or Sunday.

And in all of creation there was one very special thing God created. He created man, Adam. And when He created Adam, God created man different from all other things He had made. Man was the only creature that could think in a special way, talk, and make decisions and was created so he could love God. Nothing else that God created can love Him like we can. God not only created man and woman, Adam and Eve, God created you. God loves you and loves everything He created.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- What do people sometimes do when they do not know the answer to something?
- What was the most special thing God created?
- Why do you think God created all the things in the world?

- How are people different for all other things God created?

# Who is Satan?



**Scripture:** Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Job 1:1-2:10

The Bible tells us that Satan was once a beautiful angel created by God. Satan was so special to God that God even gave him special power. The Bible also tells us at one time Satan obeyed God in every way and did everything right.

But soon Satan became very proud of himself he thought he was better than any other being that God had created. He wanted to have a throne above God and be in control. Satan forgot that he was to do what God wanted him to do and now wanted to do just what he wanted to do. Satan was not alone. He had talked to other angels about following him instead of God.

So God put him out of heaven and sent him down to earth because of the way he disobeyed and behaved. And now Satan still wants to be greater than God so he spends his time to trying to get other people to follow him and disobey God. One way that Satan can do that is to try to get as many people as possible to disobey God. Satan wants us to listen to him rather than God.

An interesting story is the story of Job, a man who lived in Old Testament times. That was thousands of years ago. Satan tried to get Job to disobey and not trust God. Job was a man who loved God and obeyed God in every way. He was a very wealthy man with a lot of land and he had a large family. He had thousands of

cattle and camels and sheep. Most of all, he loved and obeyed God.

One day God and Satan had a conversation. God asked Satan what he thought about Job who obeyed God all the time. Satan knew how much Job trusted God had and said Job only loved him because of all the good things God had given him. Satan said to God, *“Take away the things you have given him and Job will not trust you any more.”*

So God told Satan he would allow Satan to test Job but not kill him. Satan thought and thought of how he might be able to make Job disobey God and Satan had an idea. Satan tried to get Job to turn against God by causing him to lose all that he had. Satan caused people to steal Job’s cattle and other animals. Then Satan caused fire to fall from the sky and burn up Job’s sheep and all his servants. Next Satan caused a great wind to come where Job’s children were having a dinner party and the wind blew down the house they were in and all Job’s children were killed.

When Job heard about this Satan was sure he would curse God and not trust God anymore. But when Job got all this bad news, he just went on his knees and said that God had given everything to him and God had taken everything away but he still loved God.

Satan then told God that Job only loved him because he still had his health and was never sick. God still believed Job would love him no matter what happened so he told Satan he could test Job again with being sick. So Satan went back to earth and caused Job to get a lot

of sores all over his body. Job was in great pain and was very sick, but he still loved God and remained faithful and trusted God.

When the testing was over God rewarded Job for loving Him and obeying Him no matter what happened. God gave Job even more cattle and more land, sheep and more camels that he ever had before. And God gave him more children, and grand children and great grand children than he ever had before.

Job proved that if a person loves and obeys God, not matter what happens, that God would take care of them. Job continued to praise God. Satan was very disappointed that he could not get Job to stop loving and trusting God. Job is a good example for us on how we should trust God even if bad things happen in our lives.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why did God put Satan out of heaven?
- Where did God send Satan when God put him and the other angels that followed him out of heaven?
- What was Satan like when he was in heaven with God?
- What did Satan try to get Job to do?
- Where does Satan live today?
- How does Satan try to get us to disobey God?
- What should we do each time Satan tries to get us to disobey God?

# What are Angels?



**Scripture:** Psalm 91:11;

Luke 1:26-38 (*Gabriel Tells Mary about Jesus*)

Matthew. 1:18-1:24 (*Angel Tells Joseph about Jesus*)

Luke 2:8-14 (*Angel Tells Shepherds about Jesus' birth & singing praise*), Matthew 2:13-15 (*Angel Tells Joseph to get up and flee Bethlehem*)

Where do angels come from? Some people think if we do good things for others here on earth God makes us angels. That just is not true.

But the Bible does tell us that angels are real. They are created by God to worship God and perform tasks for Him like delivering messages, serving and protecting His believers. The Bible also tells us that angels exist as spirits – not with material bodies but sometimes they can appear in human form. There are several accounts in the Bible where angels appeared to people as humans.

When you want to know what is true, the best place to find out is the Bible. Here are some facts in the Bible about angels:

- Angels were created before the world and man. (Job 38:6,7)
- Angels were created holy. (Ezek.28: 15; Jude 6)
- Angels have emotions. Job 38:7; Luke 2:13; 15:10)
- Angels have a will. (Jude 6)
- An angel can be in only one place at one time. (Dan.9: 21-23; 10:10-14)

- Angels have more knowledge than man. (Matt.24: 31; Luke 1:13-16) but less than God (Matt.24: 36)
- Angels have more power than man. (2 Pet.2: 11; acts 5:19) but less than God.
- Angels serve believers. (Heb. 1:14)
- Angels act as agents in answering prayer. (Dan 9:20-24; 10:12)
- Angels protect believers. (2 Kings 6:13-17; Acts 5:17-20; 12:7)
- Angels act as witnesses for God. (1 Tim. 5:21; 1 Cor. 4:9)

## **Some stories about angels**

### **Luke 1:26-38 -The Angel Gabriel tells Mary about Jesus**

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that God especially chose her. Mary was afraid at first. (You would be too!) But Gabriel told her not to be afraid and that she had been chosen to be the mother of Jesus, the Son of God.

### **Mt. 1:18-1:24 - An angel tells Joseph about Jesus**

An angel appeared to Joseph, Mary's fiancé in a dream. Joseph was promised to be Mary's husband, but they were not married yet. The angel told Joseph not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife and that Mary would indeed have a son through the work of the Holy Spirit. The angel told Joseph to name Him Jesus because He was going to save people from their sins.

### **Luke 2:8-14 - An angel tells shepherds about Jesus' birth**

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, an angel appeared to



shepherds living out in the fields nearby. The angel told them not to be afraid that he was delivering great news to them. He told the news that the Savior, Christ the Lord was born and he told the shepherds where to go see the baby. Then hundreds of angels appeared to the shepherds all praising God saying, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill to men!"*

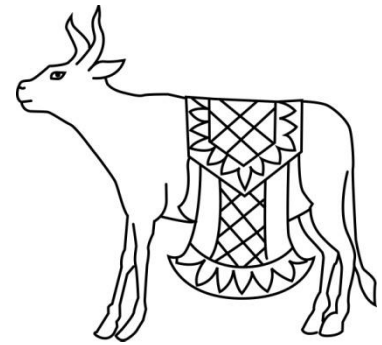
**Mt. 2:13-15 - An angel tells Joseph to get up and go from the place where they were living.**

Some time after Jesus was born, wise men from a far away place to visit and worship Jesus. They brought Jesus precious gifts. When they left an angel appeared again to Joseph in a dream and told Joseph to take his family and go to Egypt because it was no longer safe where they were living.

**Questions and discussion:**

- Why do you think many people were afraid when they saw an angel?
- Do angels have wings? Some of God's creations do. We are told in other parts of the Bible, that there are two kinds of creations that have wings, Cherubim (4 wings) and Seraphim. (6 Wings).
- In these angel stories, what were some of the jobs the angels were doing for God?

# False gods and False Philosophies



**Scripture:** Romans 1:20-23 / Exodus 32  
Exodus 19:1 / 1 Chronicles 28:9

If you were going on a hike up a mountain trail that you had never hiked before, how would you know the way to go? Most trails have trail markers placed there by others who have hiked that trail before which tell others the right trail to get to the top of the mountain. If you are hiking on a marked trail and come to a divided path with two ways to take, which one would you take? Sometimes both ways might seem right but only one trail will get to the top of the mountain. The other might end up in a canyon with no way up. What you need is a guide that knows the way and the right path to take.

It is not much different when we think about religions. How do we know which religion is right or true? For many people that is a very difficult question. Some people will tell you that it doesn't matter which religion you follow that all religions lead to the same god. But just because some people say that does not make that statement true.

In many religions people worship and pray to objects and not the living God described in the Bible. Some religions make people or objects equal with God, such as man made idols, animals, the sun,

moon and stars. Other people believe God is in all of nature like rocks and trees. Some religions use Bible verses that make them look like they follow the Bible but they do not follow all the Bible, Jesus, or His teachings. Many add their own ideas to some Bible verses. When we follow what anyone says or teaches that is not 100% based on what the Bible teaches, we are taking a wrong trail.

Three months after the Israelites had witnessed all that God had done for them they took a wrong trail. The Israelites had seen the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 19:1) the glory of God on the mountain (Exodus 19:16) and had promised God to follow all His commands. (Exodus 19:8).

Moses went up on the mountain to meet with God to get instructions for what he was to do as the leader or trail guide of the Israelites. The people became tired of waiting for Moses to return and began complaining to Aaron. Then people asked Aaron to make other gods for them to worship. Aaron was afraid of the people complaining and told them to give him their gold. Then Aaron had a calf idol made from the gold and the people sacrificed to the calf idol and worshiped it.

The people forgot about God and had a wild party to worship the golden calf. When Moses came down from the mountain and his meeting with God he saw the wild party and was so angry he threw down the tablets God had written and broke them. Then Moses punished the people for worshiping the idol.

Aaron made all sorts of excuses for himself and the people but it did not matter what they said, they had disobeyed God. They told God they were sorry for disobeying and promised again to obey and follow His law.

It is very easy for people to forget about God and to begin to put other things in the place of God. When we do that it is the same as idol worship, like worshiping the television, video games, cars, money or even time – using all our time for other things and not giving God any of our time. That is making an idol out of things and taking the wrong trail to God.

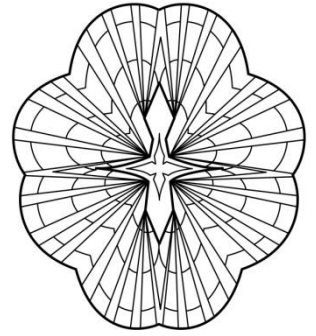
The Bible tells us in Romans 1:23 that since the very beginning of time man has known about the true God because nature itself tells about Him so that everyone who does not follow God has no excuse. There is no excuse for taking the wrong trail in life.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- What does the Bible tell us about religions that follow teachings not written by God?
- Discuss religions that have some parts that seem Christian but do not fully follow the Bible, the Word of God.
- Why is it important that we only follow the teachings of the Bible and not follow the writings or teachings of men or women?
- How can we know what is true?

# How Everything Began

**Scripture:** Genesis 1, Psalm 33:6;  
Psalm 148:8; Mark 4:41; Colossians 1:16-17;  
Hebrews 1:3; 11:3



When you look around at everything that is made in the world it is amazing. It is amazing that birds can fly and that trees can grow. It is amazing that the moon sun and stars all stay where they are supposed to in the heavens. It is amazing that scientists tell us that the entire universe is so large it cannot be measured. It is amazing that humans have the ability to think, to talk and makes decisions and that humans can build things like houses and skyscrapers and cars. Everything about the world is just so amazing. Did you ever wonder how everything like this world came to be?

Well, there are only two things that we can believe about how everything was made. We can believe what the Bible says that God made everything, or we can believe ideas that people say about how everything was made.

Here is one theory-idea that tries to explain how everything began. This idea says that there were certain tiny particles floating through empty space. Suddenly all of these particles came together in one place to form a very, very hot center. Then the center exploded and sent pieces of the center and energy out into space. Those pieces, called matter, slowly cooled and formed with other pieces of matter that came together and formed all the heavens and the earth and

other planets. It is just an idea. It is not anything that anyone has ever been able to prove.

Another idea that some people think as to how people were made is that millions or billions of years ago there existed some sort of mud material on the earth. This mud material contained some small parts. Over time, those parts formed themselves into a living, single-cell that you could not even see with your eye. Over millions of years that small part became larger and made itself into more parts until it became a person.

The Bible tells us after God created the heavens and the earth, He began to make things, just like you would make something out of clay, or even a cake out of different things you might put in a bowl. The Bible says that in six days God took the material He had already created and out of that material He made land and seas, the sun and moon, all the things of the earth like the seas and mountains, grass and trees, animals, birds, insects and everything that is alive and part of the earth. The Bible doesn't tell us all the special ways that God made everything; it just tells us that God was the one who made it all.

The Bible also does not tell us if God's days were the same as our 24 hour days. We just do not know. We do know from the Bible that God created time and also that God's time is not the same as our time (2 Peter 3:8)

After God created everything in the universe, God made one more thing that was very special, God made man. The Bible tells us in the

book of Genesis, 1:27, the first book in the Bible, “*God created humankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them, male and female He created them.*”

If we believe what the Bible says about creation, we believe it by faith, trusting that what God says in His Word is true. The Bible says that in the very beginning of everything God created the heavens and the earth. God created the entire universe, places that we know exist and even heavens so far away we don't yet know about them.

The Bible says, “*Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*” (Genesis 2:7) Mankind was made as a very special part of all creation. God breathed His own breath into Adam to make him come alive. God did not do that with animals, birds or fish. They were all made as living beings according to the Bible. The Bible says very clear that God created humans. No one can prove that it was God who made Adam and Eve and breathed life into them, but we believe it by faith.

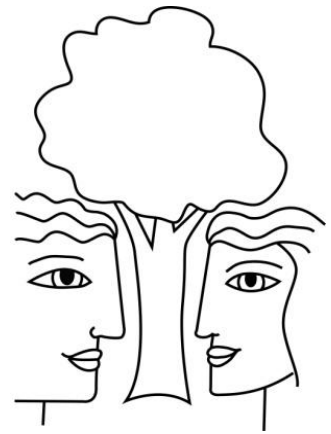
### **Questions and Discussion:**

- If you did not have a Bible what ideas do you think you might believe about how everything was made?
- If you look at a tree, or flower or bird or an animal, what does the way they are made tell you about God? Why do you think some people do not want to believe what the Bible says?

# Adam and Eve

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:7, 15-24

Press your finger on the table. Did you know that your fingerprint is different from anyone else's? If your fingerprint were compared to one million other fingerprints yours would still be different?



God not only created people special from all other things He created, God created each person different from everyone else that has ever been born or from anyone that ever will be born. Even identical twins have differences. They may look exactly the same, but there still are differences. Identical twins do not have the same brain so each one can think differently from his or her twin. Identical twins even have different fingerprints.

The first people God created were Adam and Eve. They were special from all other things God created because they were created in God's image. In many ways we are like God; we can think, we can talk, and we can love others. We can also make decisions.

We can decide to be kind to someone or we can decide to be mean. We can decide to obey our parents or we can decide to disobey. We can decide to love someone or we can decide not to love someone. People have the ability to make decisions and that makes them very different from all other things that are created.



First God made all the animals and other living creatures. After God made the birds and the animals and the living creatures in the sea, God saw what He had made and said it was good. God even made the insects and snakes and crocodiles and also said that was good too. What God did when He created the world was just amazing. No one could ever create what God made.

Then God created the first man, Adam, out of the dust of the ground and God put His own breath into Adam. Adam was different from all of the other things God had created. God did not put His own breath into animals or fish or birds, but God did put His own breath into man.

After God created Adam, God saw that Adam was still lonely. God knew that Adam needed someone like himself to talk to and be with. So God put Adam into a deep sleep and took one of Adam's bones and from that bone God created a woman, Eve, to be his companion. I am sure they also both had fingerprints that were different from each other even though Eve was made from one of Adam's bones.

God placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful garden to live. Adam and Eve had all they needed in the garden; they had food to eat, sunshine and the garden was watered from the streams that ran through it. There were fruit trees and vegetables and peanuts and all good things for them to eat. The garden was perfect in every way. The weather was also perfect every day. It was not too hot and

it was not too cold. Every day the weather was just right. Adam and Eve had no clothes, they did not need clothes and it did not bother them.

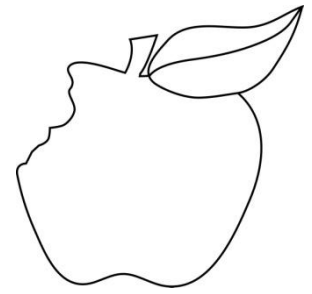
Adam and Eve were very happy. They had each other and were not lonely. Sometimes God would come and walk in the garden with them and talk with them. They loved God and obeyed Him every day. Adam and Eve lived in a perfect world. But God even knew from the very beginning that this perfect world would not last. God knew that one day something would happen that would make Him very unhappy and make Adam and Eve unhappy. God also knew that no matter what happened. He would always love Adam and Eve and all the people that would come after them. But for now, God and Adam and Eve enjoyed time every day with each other.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- How do you know that you are different from all other things God has created?
- How are people different from animals and birds?
- What are some of the ways that you are different from your brother or sister or friends your age?
- Why did God create Eve as a companion for Adam?
- What does it mean when we say that the garden was a perfect place?

# Sin Enters the World

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:7, 15-24



It is difficult to imagine a really perfect place. In this world nothing is really perfect except for God. Often people get so unhappy with things because things are not perfect. We buy some clothes and sometimes they do not fit just right. They just are not perfect. Or we get a new toy for Christmas and we thought it was the perfect gift. Then we find a friend of ours got something almost the same only his or hers was a little better. So our present was not as perfect as maybe we thought.

The garden where Adam and Eve lived was a perfect place. Adam and Eve did not even have to work. God gave them all the food they would ever wanted. In the center of that garden was one tree that God said they could not eat from. That tree was called the tree of knowing the difference between good and evil. God told them if they did eat from that tree, they would die.

But there was also something else in that garden that was not so perfect and that was Satan. Satan is the enemy of God and Satan had a plan to trick Adam and Eve into disobeying God.

One day Eve was walking past that tree that had fruit and God said they should not eat the fruit. The serpent called to Eve and started talking to her about the beautiful garden. As the serpent Satan kept talking to Eve he pretended to notice the fruit tree and told Eve how

delicious that fruit looked. Then he suggested that maybe Eve should try some of that fruit because it looked so good. Eve said she and Adam were not allowed to eat the fruit from that tree or they would die.

Then the serpent told Eve the biggest lie ever told. He told Eve what God said was not true. He told Eve if she ate that fruit she would not die but they would be just like God and that she would know wonderful things that she never knew before.

Eve thought about what the serpent said and believed what he told her. So Eve picked some of the fruit and she ate it. When she did, she now understood new things so she quickly took some of the fruit and gave it to Adam. She told Adam about what the serpent told her and gave some of the fruit to Adam and he took the fruit and he also ate it. Once they both ate the fruit, they knew they had disobeyed God.

When God came to the garden, like He did almost every day to walk and talk with Adam and Eve, He could not find them where they usually met. So God called to them. Adam and Eve were hiding in the shrubs because now they knew they had disobeyed God. They finally came out from where they were and God asked them why they were hiding. Then they told God they were hiding because they had no clothes and were naked and they were afraid.

Then God asked them if they disobeyed and ate the fruit He told them not to eat? Adam blamed Eve. He told God Eve gave him

some of the fruit and he ate it. Then God looked at Eve and Eve blamed the serpent Satan. She told God the serpent told her to eat it and she did. Adam and Eve never said to God they were sorry for disobeying Him. God was so unhappy because Adam and Eve had disobeyed.

Because Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God had to put them out of the garden forever. God did this because there was another tree in the garden, which was called the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve could no longer be allowed to eat from that tree, because now their bodies would get old and someday they would die, just like God said they would.

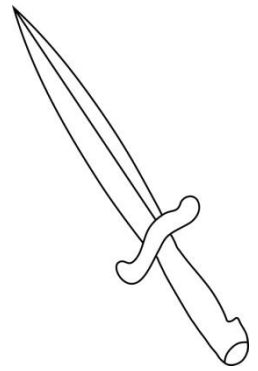
The perfect world was not perfect any more. And God did not forget about the serpent. He also punished Satan for what he had done but God knew that this was not the last time He would have to punish Satan. God knew that Satan was going to try to make everyone else disobey too. And that is what Satan does today. He tries to make all of us disobey God.

### **Questions and discussion**

- What did Adam and Eve do that made God unhappy?
- How did Satan trick Eve?
- What did God have to do because of Adam and Eve's sin?
- Why did God make Adam and Eve leave the garden, the perfect place?

# Cain and Abel

**Scripture:** Genesis 4:1-16



Robert and his brother Carl just do not get along. They are only one year apart in age; Robert is the oldest, Carl is younger but bigger than his brother. Carl is involved in sports and plays on the school football team. Robert looks like he is younger than his brother.

Because the brothers are only a year apart they often argue about who gets to use the computer or play video games. They both are interested in many of the same things. Even though Robert is one year older he does not always get his way or what he wants to do so Robert and Carl often argue. Does this sound familiar? In many families brothers and sisters do not always get along until they are older and become adults. Living in the same house can sometimes make it more difficult to get along.

Adam and Eve had two children, both boys, Cain and Abel. Cain was the older brother and Abel was the younger. The boys grew up in a loving family.

When Cain and Abel were young men they came to worship God and give Him sacrifices. Abel brought an animal sacrifice offering, the best of his flock. Cain knew God required an animal sacrifice but he wanted to do things his way so he brought a grain offering. God accepted Abel's sacrifice offering because he knew Abel's heart,

that he wanted to please God. But God rejected Cain's offering because God knew Cain's heart that he did not want to obey God but wanted to sacrifice his own way.

Cain got angry with God for not accepting his offering and was jealous of Abel because God accepted his sacrifice offering. Cain was so jealous of Abel that his heart turned to hatred toward his brother. God warned Cain that if he would change his attitude that God would accept his offering and God also warned Cain that his jealousy and hatred would lead to sin. But Cain refused to listen to God. He only became angrier and hated his brother even more.

One day Cain was out in the field with his brother and Cain was so angry he killed Abel. Later God asked Cain where his brother was. God already knew what happened but he wanted to see what Cain would say. Cain told God he didn't know where Abel was and that he wasn't responsible to take care of his brother. God told Cain He knew what Cain had done, that he had killed his own brother and told Cain He would punish him for the rest of his life for his sin and disobedience.

Cain was very sad because he was being punished but the Bible does not say that he ever told God he was sorry. Because of his sin and refusal to tell God he was sorry Cain lived an unhappy life.

God has requirements for how He wants us all to live. He wants us to follow His ways not our own ways. When things go wrong it is easy to blame others or sometimes even blame God for what we do

that is wrong.

Like Cain, the decisions we make can have life long consequences. But no matter how much we have done that is wrong, no matter how often we have disobeyed our parents or God, God is always ready to forgive us. But that does not mean we won't suffer the punishment or consequences of sin.

The great thing is, if we disobey God or our parents and admit that we have done wrong and ask forgiveness, God forgives us and our parents will forgive us. The Bible reminds us when God forgives us that whatever we did God does not remember it any longer. It is forgotten and forgotten forever. If Cain had asked God to forgive him, God would not only have forgiven him but would have forgotten that Cain had ever killed his brother. Cain would still have the consequences for what he had done, but he would never be reminded of the time he disobeyed ever again.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- How were Cain and Abel different even though they were brothers?
- What was the saddest part of the story of Cain and Abel?
- Can we make bad decisions that can change our life?
- When we do sin, what can we do about it?

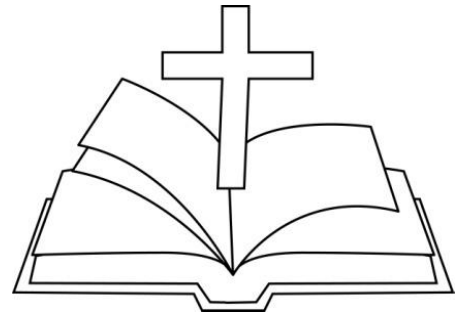


# A Messiah is Promised

**Scripture:** Isaiah, 7:1-14, 6:1-13,  
9:6-7

Micah 5:2, Matthew 1:22-23, Matthew  
16:16

Luke 1:26-38, John 1:41, Numbers 12:6, Deuteronomy 18:18,22



In the story of the Wizard of Oz, in the beginning of that movie Dorothy is running away from home because a neighbor wanted to take her dog, Toto, and she came to a fortuneteller in a wagon. He had a crystal glass ball and in that crystal ball pretended to know about Dorothy's future. Later in that film the wicked witch also had a crystal ball where she could see Dorothy and what Dorothy and her friends were doing. That is just a movie, pretend, and it is not real.

If you ever go to a carnival or to a tourist location you might see fortunetellers or people with Tarot cards or others that claim they can tell you about your future. If you do see these places, you need to know that God gives people very specific warnings about these things, that they are not of God, and someone trying to tell you your future is not from God.

The Bible has thousands of prophecies that all came true. The prophets of the Old Testament wrote about things that would happen hundreds of years later. The test of a true prophet of God was whether or not what they said came true 100% of the time. There was no allowance made for what they said not being 100%

accurate. If a prophet claimed to speak for God and what they said did not happen, they were put to death. There is not one Bible prophecy that did not come true except for those predictions of things that have not yet happened.

In the Old Testament, hundreds of years before Jesus was born, two prophets of God predicted that the Messiah would come. Isaiah was a prophet of God. Isaiah gave King Ahaz and all the Jewish people a promise from God, that one day a Messiah will be born and His name will be called Immanuel – the name that Jesus was called. This was over 700 years before Jesus was born.

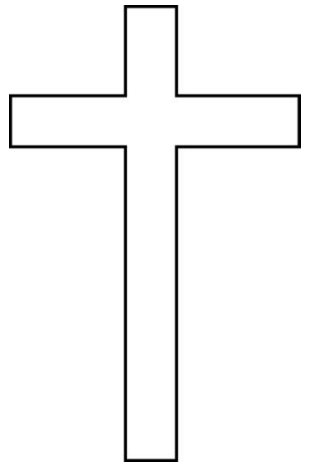
Another prophet of the Old Testament, Micah, also predicted about the future. Micah said Jesus would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). These predictions are a reminder that God has a plan for the entire world and God started His plan from the very beginning.

God not only sent His prophets, but He has given us the Bible, His Word, that reminds us that all of what God says has come true and will come true. The Bible, the Word of God, is the only thing we should trust when it comes to telling about the future.

#### Questions and Discussion:

- Do some people today try predict about things that will happen in the future?
- Do those predictions usually come true?
- Why are the Old Testament Bible verses important?

# God's Plan for Mankind



**Scripture:** Genesis 1:31, Romans 1:20  
Romans 3:23, I John 1:9

Can you believe there was a time when every day was a perfect day? Think about it. You get up in the morning and you are not even the least bit tired.

Perfect. You come down for breakfast and it is perfect. You go to school or work and everything is perfect. You come home and relax and everything you want is right there...perfect. And the next day and every day is exactly the same...perfect.

When God created the world, all things were perfect – there was not one thing wrong. Adam and Eve lived in a perfect world. Every day for them was perfect and in the garden they had everything they would ever want or need.

They never disobeyed God so there was no sin. But God gave Adam and Eve and God gives us the choice to obey or disobey Him. When Adam and Eve disobeyed and ate the fruit God told them not to eat, the perfect relationship between God and them and for everyone born into this world after them was broken.

But the story did not end there. God provides a way for our relationship with Him to be restored. There is nothing we can do ourselves to fix the broken relationship but God provided a way to repair this through Jesus. Over the thousands of years from Adam

and Eve until today God has made this way for people to come back to Him and love and obey Him. But that does not happen automatically. God gives us the choice whether or not to accept what He has done to fix our relationship with Him. God said if we confess our sin, our sin is automatically forgiven, but we must ask God to do that and stop disobeying Him and what His Word, the Bible, tells us how we should live.

The apostle Paul wrote about this and reminded the Romans that since the creation of the world God's people knew about God and His power by seeing all of creation that surrounded them. Paul wrote that people made the choice not to follow or obey God and to follow other gods, make idols and worship what God created rather than God the Creator.

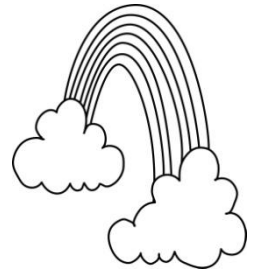
Those who accept Jesus, ask God to forgive them for sin, will show they know Jesus and obey God in the way they live every day.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Describe what a perfect day would be like for you
- What are things that do not make your day perfect?
- How do choices determine what makes your day better or worse?
- The Bible tells us we are not bring perfect but also tells us how we can we can have our sin forgive. How can that happen?

# Noah and God's Promise

**Scripture:** Gen. 6:1- 9:17



Did you ever start to make something and the project turned out to be a really big mess? Maybe you were trying to paint a picture and all the colors ran together and it looked awful. Or maybe someone was trying to bake a cake and it just did not bake right and looked awful and tasted awful.

This is a story about a project that went wrong. And most important, this was God's project. It was the world that He had created. That was what had gone wrong.

Many years after Adam and Eve there lived a man named Noah and his family. In the time of Noah most people had forgotten about God. Only Noah and his family remembered about God and obeyed God.

When God looked over all the earth He saw that almost everyone had forgotten about Him. They were disobeying Him and were doing all kinds of things that God had told people not to do. God was very sorry He had made people. His project was not turning out the way he had hoped. God just wanted to love all people and have everyone love Him. But God also created people with the ability to make choices, and now almost all the people on earth were making really bad choices and were not following God.

But Noah loved God very much and Noah and his family obeyed God even when all the other people did not. That part made God happy.

God finally decided He would destroy everything on the earth except Noah and his family and start the world over again. He told Noah He was going to make rain and that water would cover the entire earth and destroy everything. Up to this time it had never rained, so even the idea of rain was something new for Noah to understand.

God then began to tell Noah about His plan. He told Noah he wanted Noah and his sons to build a large boat, an ark. When he was finished Noah was to take his family and two of every creature, animals, and birds into the ark before the rain came so they could be saved.

Noah obeyed God even though he did not understand what rain was and began building the ark exactly the way God told him. Soon the people where Noah lived saw him and his sons building something. They all came to ask Noah what he was doing. Noah told them what God had said and he warned them that a flood was coming. But the people only laughed. They just thought that Noah was a silly old man and that he was wasting his time.

So all the people went back to having their parties and disobeying God. But Noah trusted God and knew that God always kept His word. If God said a flood was coming, Noah knew that there would

be a flood coming.

Finally Noah and his sons finished the project. The ark was done. Noah then took two of every kind of creature, animal and birds into the ark with him and his family. Then God closed the door of the ark and caused it to rain for 40 days and 40 nights. The rain and water from the ground caused a flood that covered the entire earth and everything God created was destroyed except for what was in the ark.

After the flood went down, Noah, his family, and all creatures and birds came out and started everything over again. When Noah came out of the ark he made a special thank you offering to God for protecting him and his family.

Then God created the rainbow in the sky and told Noah every time people would see this it would be a sign for all times that He would never destroy the earth again by a flood.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why was God sad about the people He had created?
- Why was Noah and his family saved from the destruction of the world?
- How does God remind us He will never destroy the world with a worldwide flood?

# The Tower of Babel

**Scripture:** Genesis 11: 1-9



What language do you speak? Most children in school now learn a second language beginning right in kindergarten. If you can speak two languages, that is really great.

Have you been with people that speak a different language than you? What did it sound like? Did all the words seem jumbled up? Did you try to guess what some of the words were and got the meaning all wrong? That is so easy to do because words in most languages do not sound the same at all in another language.

Did you know there are thousands of languages and dialects in the world? A dialect (pronounced die-a-lek) is a form of a main language but often people who speak in that language form cannot even understand another person who speaks a different form of the same language. Chinese has many dialects and so do the African languages.

During Noah's time everyone spoke the same language. Once the earth and all the people were destroyed and God started the world over again, the only language was the language Noah and his family spoke. So, when his children married and had children and those children married and had children, everyone on earth had the same language



After the flood God told Noah and his family to spread out and fill the earth with their generations of children. Noah had three sons and each son had many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Instead of doing what God said and spreading over the earth, everyone continued to live in the same area. It was just easier that way because everyone knew the same language and was familiar with other people in the large town where they lived.

Soon the town became a very large city. The city had become so large that one day some of the leaders from the city got together and decided they should build a high tower that reached into the sky. This way people that lived far on the outside of the city would know where the center of the city and the center of the people were located. They wanted to make a name for themselves. They wanted everyone to know the center point of city so people would not move that far away. The people thought more about themselves than they did about obeying God.

One day God came down and visited the city and the tower. He wanted to see first hand what the people were doing. God knew that since they all had one language there was no limit to what the people would accomplish. And this was not what God wanted for them. God had told them to spread out over all the earth.

So God had a plan. This is what He did. God gave people all different languages so they could not understand each other. It was now impossible for them to continue building the tower because

they could not understand instructions. When the leaders told people where to put bricks and how to build the next part of the tower, their instructions were something like this: “**Xeny tula brefgt nonymyra sum lou teee na brakel.**” Did you understand what that meant? Neither did the workers. They looked at each other and wondered what their leader was saying. Then one worker said to another one, “**Kruply notuwan lesegy batreforten.**”

Even the workers no longer understood each other. So the people gave up building the tower. Then the groups of people that could understand each other and had the same language moved away to different parts of the earth to live.

The work on the tower stopped forever. The place where the tower stood was name Babel because this was the place where languages began and different languages sounded like babblings to each other.

Sometimes when you disobey God He has a way of getting you to do what He wants you to do.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- After the flood what did God tell Noah and his family to do?
- Why did the people all stay in one area?
- If people did not spread out what are some of the problems people would have had if they stayed in the same city and lived there?

# Sodom and Gomorrah

**Scripture:** Genesis 18:20 - 19:1; 12-29

A boy was hiking with his father when all of a sudden his father said to him “*Erik, stop and do not move.*” Erik stopped and did exactly what his father told him. He did not move.



While he was standing there very still his father picked up a large rock and stepped behind a small bush next to the trail and smashed the rock toward the ground. Then the father said to his son, “*Come and take a look.*” When Erik walked over there was a rattlesnake that his father had killed with the rock. If Erik had taken one more step he would have stepped right on the snake. His father knew there was danger and because Erik obeyed his life was saved.

God warns us over and over about following His ways. Some people refuse to obey God’s words and when they refuse it can have a deadly result.

Many years and many generations after God confused the people of the earth with languages and the tower of Babel, God spoke to a man by the name of Abram and told him to take his wife and his servants, pack up his tents, and move to a land God would show him.

Abram was obedient to God and soon began his travel to the land

of Canaan. His nephew, Lot, also went with him. When they arrived in the land God spoke again to Abram and told him one day he would be the father of more descendants than he could count and God even changed his name to Abraham, meaning father of many nations. Abraham could hardly believe this as he had been married for many years and he was an old man and he and his wife had no children.

Abraham and Lot had too many flocks and servants so they decided to share the land. Lot went and took a place many miles away from Abraham near two very sinful cities, Sodom and Gomorrah. Even though Lot was a man who followed after God, the people of the cities where he lived were some of the most sinful and evil anywhere.

One day God told Abraham He was going to destroy these two cities because they were so evil. Abraham knew his nephew Lot and his family lived there and began to try to bargain with God. He asked God if there were only 50 righteous people there would God spare the cities. God said yes, He would spare the cities for fifty righteous people. Then Abraham said, how about if there were only forty-five righteous. God said okay. Then Abraham kept going down, bargaining with God, and said for forty righteous, then if there were only thirty. Then Abraham went to twenty and finally ten. God said He would spare the cities if ten righteous people would be found there. But there were not even ten righteous people in those two cities.

Later that night two angels came to Abraham's nephew, Lot, who was a godly man, and told him God was going to destroy the cities and that he and his wife should leave at once, run for their lives and not look back. Lot took his wife by the hand and began to run and he called to his daughters fiancés to flee with them but they thought he was joking and they would not leave. So Lot, his wife and daughters began running as fast as they could. But Lot's wife stopped and looked back at the cities and when she did she was turned into a pillar of salt. She had disobeyed God's instructions to not look back.

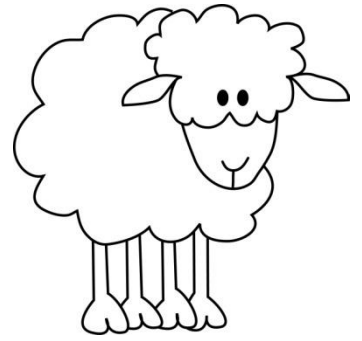
As the morning sun came up Abraham could see that the cities had fire raining down on them and were burning. Sodom and Gomorrah, the two most wicked cities on earth, had been destroyed exactly as God said they would. But God had listened to Abraham who pleaded for Lot and his children who lived there that God would spare them and God did.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- What did God promise Abraham?
- What cities did Lot decide that he would live near?
- What was dangerous about the choices that Lot made?
- Why did Abraham try to bargain with God when God said He was going to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah?
- What instructions did the angels of God give Lot?
- What did Lot's wife do that was wrong?
- What are people today warned about and refuse to listen?
- What can we learn from this story?

# Abraham's Faith

**Scripture:** Genesis 21:1-19; 22:1-14



The story of Abraham is one of the most interesting stories of the Old Testament.

Abraham was a follower of God and was very faithful to God. He and his wife trusted in God. There was a time when God wanted to test Abraham about his faith and trust.

God spoke to Abraham one day and promised to give Abraham a family that would be as many as the stars in the sky and as the grains of sand on the beach. Can you count the stars in the sky or the sand on the beach? God promised to make Abraham into a great nation with millions of descendants.

When Abraham was 100 years old and had no children angels came to meet with Abraham and reminded him of God's promise for a large family. Abraham could not believe that this could still happen because he was now so very old. But God made his promise and God keeps His promises.

A year later Abraham had a son. He named him Isaac. Abraham loved his son more than anything besides God. And this is when God tested Abraham's faith. He told Abraham to take Isaac to a special mountain and there to sacrifice Isaac as an offering. Without even questioning if this was really what God wanted him to do, Abraham obeyed God by setting out for the journey the

following morning.

When they got to the mountain Abraham asked his servants to stay while he and his son went up to worship God. When they got to the top Abraham built an altar and tied up Isaac as the sacrifice. Then Abraham raised his knife but God called out, “*Abraham, Abraham, do not lay a hand on the boy.*”

God knew that Abraham would not hold out on God even his only son Isaac. Then Abraham and Isaac heard a noise in the bushes and there was a ram. God had provided the ram for the sacrifice. God repeated His blessing on Abraham and fulfilled his promise through him. Years later Isaac grew up and got married and had many children and his children had many children and they had many children and years later there was so many descendants of Abraham that they were like the stars of the sky and the grains of sand on the beach, you could not count them.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why did God choose Abraham?
- How was Abraham tested of his faith?
- Is there anything impossible for God?
- Why did God’s promise seem strange to Abraham?

# Joseph and His Brothers



**Scripture:** Genesis 37 – 50; Romans 8:28

Did you ever have a really bad year at school or at your job when you thought everything was just going wrong? Maybe when that happened you had a special teacher, or a boss at your job or maybe a relative or someone at church helped you to learn something that was difficult for you to do? If so, it could be that God put that person in your life to help you so that some time later you could do a special work for God. God sometimes uses certain people to work out His plans for others. And God can work through what seems to be impossible circumstances for His purposes. Those who are faithful to God and trust in Him know that everything that happens to us God can use for our good.

God had promised Abraham that his family would be God's chosen people and that God would watch over them in years to come. Joseph was Abraham's great-grandson and was one of 12 sons of Jacob.

Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons and made a special robe for him. This really made Joseph's brothers angry and they were jealous of Joseph.

When Joseph was seventeen years old he had a dream. He told his dream to his brothers and father that they would bow down to him.



The brothers got even angrier with Joseph because of these dreams.

The anger of his brothers became worse and worse toward Joseph. They got so angry they started to talk about getting rid of him.

One day the brothers were far away from home taking care of their father's sheep. Joseph came out to see what his brothers were doing. He had walked a long way that day to find them. The brothers saw Joseph coming and they made a plan to get rid of him.

First they grabbed Joseph and put him in a dry well, deep in the ground. Then some traders came along on their way to Egypt, a land far away from where Jacob and his sons lived. The brothers stopped the traders and said they would sell Joseph as a slave to them for 20 pieces of silver. The traders agreed and the brothers sold off Joseph to them. The trader went on their way to Egypt and took Joseph with them.

Then the brothers took Joseph's special coat his father had made for Joseph and covered it with goat's blood and brought his coat to their father. Jacob cried and said wild animals must have killed him and the brothers remained silent and never told their father the truth.

But Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold to Pharaoh's palace where he soon became the master in Pharaoh's household. Several years later Pharaoh had troubling dreams and one of Pharaoh's servants

told him about Joseph who could interpret dreams. Pharaoh called for Joseph and Joseph told him the meaning of his dreams. He told Pharaoh that the dreams were messages from God that warned Pharaoh that Egypt would have seven years when all crops would grow well but that seven years would be followed by another seven years of famine when nothing would grow. Joseph told Pharaoh all of Egypt should save grain every year for seven years so there would be enough when the seven years of famine came. Pharaoh was so pleased with Joseph he gave him second place in all of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself.

When the famine came Joseph's father, brothers and all the family suffered and needed food. Joseph's father sent the brothers to Egypt to purchase food and when they came before Joseph to buy food Joseph recognized his brothers but they did not recognize him.

Joseph had them go and bring his father and the rest of his family to Egypt. When Joseph's father and all the family arrived Joseph revealed to them who he really was. The brother's cried and bowed down to Joseph and asked Joseph for his forgiveness for what they did to him.

This was exactly like the dream Joseph had had many years before. Joseph told his brothers even though they sold him into slavery and they now said this was a terrible thing they did, that God had a plan for Joseph and meant all of this for good. Because Joseph was a powerful leader in Egypt, God used his circumstances to save his entire family from starvation.

**Questions and Discussion:**

- What would you have done if you were Joseph when your brothers came to you at Pharaoh's palace?
- What would you do if you have a brother like Joseph?
- What does God want us to learn from this story?

# Moses is Protected by God

**Scripture:** Exodus 1:7-2:10;  
Matthew 18:10



Did you know that kids have special angels that watch over them? If you don't believe this read Matthew 18:10.

Did you ever “almost” get into some sort of accident but something happened so you were not hurt? Maybe you almost ran out into the street and a car was coming and a friend stopped you or shouted a warning for you to watch out. Maybe you did not see anyone there and the accident missed you or something just seemed to make you stop from walking into the street. Or maybe you were at work on our job and a piece of machinery broke and almost injured you really badly but someone pulled you out of the way just in time. Or maybe no one pulled you out of the way but you just moved just at the right time to miss something that would have fallen on you. That could have been God or His angels protecting you.

The Bible tells us that many years after Joseph died the leaders of Egypt forgot about Joseph and how God had saved them all from starvation during the time of famine. Joseph's family and their children and their grandchildren soon became many people who still knew and obeyed God. These were called the Israelites or Hebrews and they were all slaves to the new Pharaoh that now ruled Egypt.

The new Pharaoh was not kind to God's people. He made them all

work very hard. He was cruel to the Hebrews and when the Hebrews complained that the work was too hard Pharaoh even made them work harder. The Hebrews cried out to God and felt as though God had forgotten about them. But God promised His people that one day He would give them a leader who would take them out of Egypt into a land of their own.

The new Egyptian king saw that there were so many Hebrew people and he was afraid soon there would be more Hebrews than Egyptian people. So the new king said that all boy babies born to the Hebrews should be killed and should be thrown into the river. Pharaoh thought this was a way to get rid of the Israelites because there were so many of them. The Egyptian soldiers went through the camps where the Hebrews lived and were taking all the boy babies and killing them.

One of the Hebrew women had a baby boy and the parents were afraid the Egyptians would find him. The mother made a basket and sealed it with tar so it would float. She wrapped up her son in soft cloth and placed him in the basket and took it to the river and set it by the reeds along the river's edge so it would not float away. Then she had the baby's sister hide in the reeds and watch to see what would happen.

That day Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to take a bath. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the basket floating she opened the blanket and found the baby and felt sorry for him. Pharaoh's daughter adopted the baby and named the baby "Moses," a name

which means he was taken out of the water. Moses would one day become the great leader of the Hebrew people who would one day help them get away from Pharaoh, just as God had promised. Moses had been protected by God in a very special way.

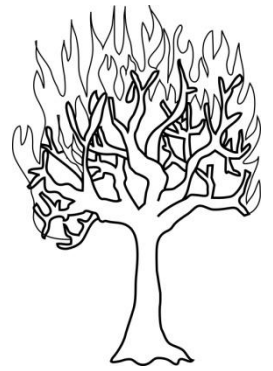
She took Moses back to the palace and there Moses was raised in Pharaoh's household and became a very important leader of the people in all of Egypt. She even hired Moses' mother to come and be his caretaker and Pharaoh's daughter never even knew this woman was Moses' real mother. So Moses' real mother still raised him and often reminded Moses how God had protected him for something very special.

**Questions and discussion:**

- What was happening to the babies being born in Egypt?
- Why was King Pharaoh afraid of the Hebrews?
- What plan did God have for Moses?

# Moses is Called

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:1-4:18



Did you know that God has a very special plan for you? God already knows what He wants you to do today, tomorrow or maybe even ten or twenty years from now. But sometimes we do not know what that plan is in advance.

When Moses was a boy he had no idea that God had a very special plan for him when he would become an adult. Moses just knew he loved God and tried his best to obey God in every way. Moses never thought he was anyone special. Well, at least not when he was a child. When he became an adult Moses got married and he was a shepherd and took care of his father-in-law's sheep. He was happy with what he was doing. Moses was a shepherd for many years.

Moses was 80 years old and was out in the meadow with the sheep when he saw a bush burning in flames and he was very curious. He walked over to the bush and what do you think he saw? The Bible says Moses saw the bush on fire and flames coming out of it. But when he came closer to the bush he saw the flames but it was not burning up. Then a voice called to Moses from the burning bush. It was God speaking to him.

God told Moses He had heard how unhappy the Hebrew people were who were living in Egypt because Pharaoh was so mean and

cruel. God also told Moses He was going to do something to help the Hebrew people.

Then God said something that Moses never expected. God told Moses he was the man God chose to help get the Hebrews out of Egypt. God told Moses that he should go to Pharaoh and tell Pharaoh to let the Hebrew people leave Egypt. But Moses was 80 years old. He questioned God and said – *“Who am I that anyone would listen to me? I am not anyone special.”* God encouraged Moses and said, *“I will be with you!”*

Moses then asked God what he should say when Pharaoh asks who has sent him and who said that he should let the Hebrew people leave Egypt. God said to tell Pharaoh and the people that **“I AM”** has sent him. That seemed very strange to Moses. Pharaoh did not even believe in God, why would Pharaoh let all the Hebrew people go just because someone named “I AM” said so?

But, Moses loved God and was obedient. So Moses talked to the leaders of Israel about God’s plan. The leaders agreed that Moses should do exactly what God told him to do. God also told Moses that at first Pharaoh would not let the people go. Then God said he would punish Pharaoh and the Egyptians so they would know who the true God was and then Pharaoh would let them go.

Moses started to give a lot excuses why he should not be the one to go and tell this to Pharaoh. Moses just did not think he was anyone special and he did not think Pharaoh would listen to him.



But God reminded Moses it was God who had told him to do this. Then God gave Moses an example of what He could do with the walking stick Moses carried in his hand. God said Moses could use his walking stick to show Pharaoh who was sending Moses and that God had power to do anything.

Moses still made another excuse why he was not the best person to do this for God. He told God he was not a good speaker and would not be able to say the right things to Pharaoh. God became upset with Moses. So to help Moses with the task God had Moses' brother, Aaron, go along with Moses to do the talking with Pharaoh. God said He would tell Moses and Aaron what to say and reminded Moses He was with them. Moses obeyed and he and Aaron went to meet with Pharaoh.

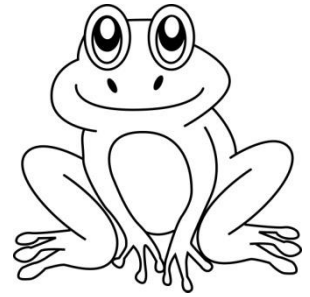
In the next story you will find out what happened.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- What was Moses answer to God when God told Moses what He wanted Moses to do?
- Was Moses obedient right away?
- Do we sometimes give God reason why we don't obey?
- What was God's promise to Moses?
- How was Moses a special person?

# Pharaoh and the Plagues

**Scripture:** Exodus 7:8-12:42



Moses took Aaron and did what God told him to do. They went to meet with Pharaoh. They told Pharaoh that God wanted them to go into the desert and worship. Pharaoh did not want the people out of his sight or away from the city because they did all the work. They were slaves in Egypt and Pharaoh made them work very hard so he told Moses he would not let them go into the dessert to worship God. If Pharaoh let the Israelites go to the desert to worship God, he was afraid they might not come back.

Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go!’*” And Pharaoh said, “No!” Moses warned Pharaoh that God would punish Egypt if they did not let the Hebrews go and worship but Pharaoh would not let them go. So God told Moses to stretch his walking stick over the waters the Nile River and all the streams of the land. When Moses did this all the water in the river and streams turned to blood and no one could drink or use it. Moses went back to Pharaoh and Pharaoh still said they could not leave Egypt. So God sent a series of 10 plagues on all of Egypt. The water turning to blood was just the first.

God sent the 2<sup>nd</sup> plague, which were frogs all over the land. They went into the houses, into people’s bed, into the oven, and into the bread bowls. Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go!’*” and Pharaoh said, “No!”

God sent the 3<sup>rd</sup> plague and told Moses to tell Aaron to stretch out his rod and strike the dust and all the dust in the land became lice on all the people and all the animals. Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go!’*” And Pharaoh said, “No!”

God sent the 4<sup>th</sup> plague, which were swarms of flies that flew all over Egypt and when Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go so they can worship me!’*” Pharaoh said, “No!”

So God sent the 5<sup>th</sup> plague, which was a disease that made all the Egyptians’ animals sick and die. Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go!’*” still Pharaoh said, “No!”

God then sent the 6<sup>th</sup> plague, which was skin boils, terrible blisters on all the people and animals. Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go!’*” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened and he said, “No!”

Next God sent the 7<sup>th</sup> plague of hailstorms and it killed men, animals and everything growing in the field but when Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘let my people go!’*” Pharaoh said, “No!”

So God sent the 8<sup>th</sup> plague of locusts (like grasshoppers) all over the land. It covered the entire land eating every leaf and fruit on the tree. Once again Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘Let my people go!’*” and Pharaoh said, “No!”

Then God sent the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, which was of darkness. All of Egypt

was covered with darkness for 3 days. No one could see anything or anybody for 3 days. Moses told Pharaoh, “*God said, ‘let my people go so they can worship me!’*” Pharaoh said, “No!”

Finally God sent the 10<sup>th</sup> plague. God had one more plague to give to Pharaoh and to Egypt, the plague on the firstborn son. God gave specific directions to the Israelites so they would be protected. He told the Israelites to sacrifice a lamb and put lamb’s blood on the sides and tops of the doorframe. God promised to pass over the houses with the lamb’s blood but every firstborn son in a house without the blood would die. This is what they called the Passover because death would “pass over” the Israelite’s home that had blood on the doorposts and top.

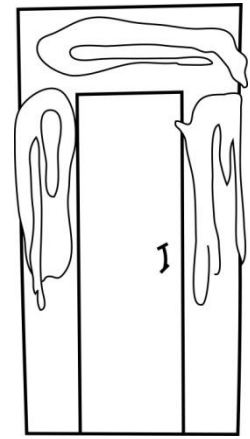
Pharaoh would not let the people go so when the angel of death came across Egypt, Pharaoh’s firstborn son as well as all the firstborn sons died of all people who did not have blood on their doorposts. Finally Pharaoh told Moses to take God’s people and go worship God.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- How many plagues did God give Pharaoh and Egypt?
- Why didn’t Pharaoh want the Israelites to leave?
- How did God use Moses and Aaron to lead the Israelites out of Egypt?

# The Passover

**Scripture:** Exodus 12:1-32, Hebrews 11:28, John 1:29, Luke 22:7, 14-20, Hebrews 9:22, Romans 3:25, John 3:16



The Passover marked a new beginning for the people of God. The lamb was to represent the perfect nature of the Messiah to come. The Passover lamb was killed and the blood put on the doorpost.

The Israelites had been in slavery in Egypt and God used Moses to prepare the Hebrews to leave Egypt and go toward the Promised Land that God would show them. God had performed several miracles through Moses and Aaron by sending plagues to Egypt to encourage Pharaoh to let the Hebrews leave Egypt. Even with the plagues of river to blood, frogs, gnats, flies, livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, Pharaoh would say he would let them leave when a plague happened and then change his mind. He did this nine times.

Then God told Moses He would send the final plague and after this Pharaoh would let them leave. Moses warned Pharaoh at midnight God would go across the land and the firstborn of all the people and animals will die because of Pharaoh's stubbornness. But Pharaoh would not follow his advice.

Then God told Moses to instruct the people to slaughter the lamb

and take the lamb's blood and sprinkle some of it on the doorposts (the sides of the door) and on the mantle (the top of the door) and that night they were to pack their belongings and wear clothes ready for travel.

The Israelites did what Moses instructed them to do. At midnight God passed through the land and in every home that did not have the blood marked on their door the firstborn male in that house died. That included the firstborn male of all slaves and animals.

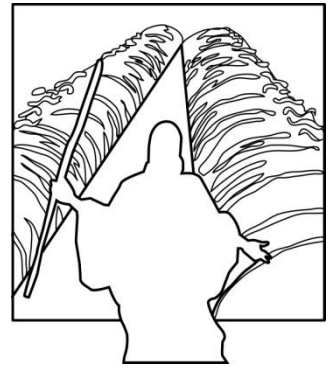
Pharaoh heard a great cry across the land and got up and found his firstborn son and all the firstborn sons of all Egyptians had died. He called for Moses and told him to leave Egypt. Then Pharaoh also asked Moses to bless him.

When this all happened the Israelites numbered over a million men, women and children. They took their bread in bowls with them, which was not even ready for baking, and all the Israelites left Egypt. Moses told the people to remember this day when God provided a way for them to get out of the slavery of Egypt.

### **Story Questioned and Discussion:**

- Why did God rescue the Israelites from Egypt?
- What did the people have to do to be protected from death?
- How was the Passover a picture of Jesus?
- What do we have to do to be protected from eternal death?
- How is Jesus similar to the Passover lamb?

# The Israelites Cross the Red Sea



**Scripture:** Exodus 13:17 – 15:21

In the last story we read that God told Moses the Hebrew people were to leave Egypt and go to a new land He would give to them. The Hebrews were special people of God. Today we call this people group the Jews. They were also called the Israelites. Abraham was the first father of the family that began this nation of people.

Today the Jews celebrate that night when God saved their children from death. They call this celebration the Passover because it was the night that the death angel passed over the Hebrew families.

God warned Moses that Pharaoh would not be happy when they left Egypt and that Pharaoh and his army would chase after them. And what God said happened? Pharaoh was mad when they left and he took his soldiers and chased after the Hebrews to bring them back. The Israelites came to the beach and sea and thought they were trapped and could not escape. They complained to Moses but Moses told them to trust God to take care of them. God was going to do even something more amazing.

When they got to the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army was chasing after them they felt they were trapped. Pharaoh's army was behind them and a sea was in front of them. God told Moses to hold his

walking stick out over the water. When Moses did this the sea parted right in half with a huge wall of water on one side and a huge wall of water on the other side. The water was as tall as a tall building. But right in the middle was a path and the ground was dry. God had made a path through the sea to the other side. The Israelites walked across the dry bottom of the ocean floor to the other side.

When Pharaoh and his army finally reached the beach and saw the Israelites on the other side of the sea they were so mad. Pharaoh and his army came after the Israelites and they also took their chariots and soldiers running on the dry ocean bottom while the high the walls of water stood tall on each side. But all of a sudden the dry bottom began to have water and the wheels of the chariots began to sink in the wet sand. All the chariots got stuck and so did the soldiers. They also began to sink in the wet sand. While they were stuck in the middle of the sea floor, God closed the walls of water and they all drowned. God protected His people from the Egyptians.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why did Pharaoh want the Israelites to stay in Egypt?
- What do you think the Hebrews said to Moses and Aaron when they came to the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army was coming up behind them?
- What did the Hebrews forget about God?



# God Provides for His People During the Exodus



**Scripture:** Exodus 2:24-25; 3:4, 16-17;  
Exodus 12:33-39; 13:21-22; 14:31; 15:22-  
27; 16:4-6, 31-32; 16:12-13; 20:1-17; 25:1-31; 23:20; 33:14;  
Numbers 15:38-39  
Deuteronomy 6; Deuteronomy 29:5

God provided a way for His people to leave the slavery of Egypt. But in spite of God's miraculous protection and provision, the people constantly complained. They forgot that God provided for them physically. They forgot that God provided for them spiritually. They forgot that God provided for their every day needs. They forgot that God provided the people with leadership. They forgot that God provides for all that we need.

The Israelites sound very much like all of us today. How quickly we can all forget how much God has done for us.

God raised up Moses to lead them out of Egypt into a land where they would have everything they needed. After the people left Egypt under Moses' leadership, God miraculously provided an escape for them through the Red Sea. When they were in the wilderness heading for the Promised Land, after three days they ran out of water. They came to a place where there was water but the water was bitter and they could not drink it

Instead of trusting God they complained to Moses. God provided for the people in a miraculous way and had Moses heal the water. Then the people ran low on food. Again, instead of trusting God they complained to Moses that they had wonderful food to eat in Egypt and why did he bring them here to die in the wilderness. God provided food by raining down bread from heaven, called manna.

The Israelites were still not happy and complained to Moses because they had no meat. So God provided thousands of quail that flew into the camp and the Israelites caught and cooked them for meat.

As the Israelites traveled on later they ran out of water again. Instead of trusting God they again complained to Moses. Once again God provided for the people by having Moses hit a rock with his rod and water gushed out.

Moses was the leader and he had a big job to do to take care of so many people. Moses was becoming very tired as people brought complaints to him all day and into the late night for Moses to judge for them. Then Moses' father in law gave him advice and said he should appoint other leaders to help him. This was God's way of God providing again for His people by having Moses appoint many leaders to help them with every day concerns.

But the people would easily forget some of the basic rules they should follow so that everyone could get along with each other. Once again, God had a plan to help His people just like God has a

way today to take care of us and help us.

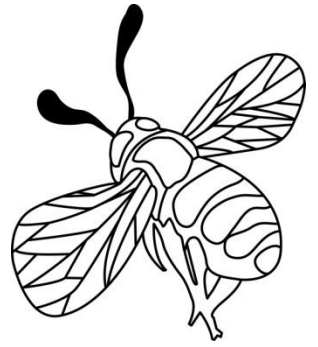
God knew they needed rules to follow so God had Moses go up on a mountain where He gave Moses the 10 Commandments, rules for the people to live by so they would love and obey God.

But in spite of following the 10 Commandments, the people disobeyed yet God continued to provide for them. Because they disobeyed, God decided He would not let them enter into the new Promised Land. He told Moses the Israelites would have to stay in the desert for 40 years until all the older generation died and only the next generation would be able to go into the Promised Land. During the 40 years God continued to provide for His people. They had bread from heaven, and meat and water. God took care of them but there were consequences for their decisions not to obey God.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- How did God provide for the people physically and spiritually?
- What did God give to His people
- Of everything God provided what was the most important?
- Does God always gives us everything we want?
- Does God provide for us everything we need?
- How does God provide for us today?

# Joshua Leads to the Promised Land



**Scripture:** Joshua 1 – 11

After Moses and the people escaped from Egypt God gave them a new land where they could live and be safe and happy. But once the Israelites got on the other side of the sea, they complained constantly to Moses about everything. No matter how much God does for us or gives us, we can be like the Israelites and become known as a complainer. Our job is not good enough...I wish we had a better house ...I don't like my teacher ...I wish I were taller ...I never get what I want ... my parents don't let me do anything ....Complaints! And, usually the people who complain have more and live better than most other people in the world.

Even when Moses told them not to worry, that God would take care of them, they did not have much faith and complained even more.

God provided water and food but the people were just never happy. Finally God decided these people were not ready to obey Him in the new land He had promised so He made them stay in the desert for 40 years. All during that time Moses and Aaron were their leaders and kept reminding them that God would care for them but they just complained anyway.

God let them wander around in the desert for 40 years until the

parents died. God thought that the children in the families would grow up and they would be more trusting of God, and then He could send them into the Promised Land and they would not complain.

During these 40 years Moses got older and so did Aaron. Finally when the 40 years were over Moses and Aaron were too old to lead the people any longer. Both Moses and Aaron died and they were buried in the wilderness.

God decided that Joshua would be the new leader so Moses had appointed Joshua to be the leader to take the Israelites into the Promised Land. The children of the Israelites now became the adults and one day Joshua told the Israelites to pack up because they were finally going to go into the Promised Land.

First Joshua sent spies to Jericho and the surrounding countryside to see what the land was like and whether or not there were enemies there. Joshua needed to know what the area was like in order to conquer the new land and lead the people.

Then Joshua led the Israelites to the Jordan River to cross into the new Promised Land. When they got to the Jordan River, God did another miracle. While the Israelites were in the wilderness God had them save some special items in a box called the Ark of the Covenant. (Not like Noah's ark – this was not a boat but a special box like a treasure chest) This was a very special box because it contained things that reminded the people about God. It was usually placed in the tabernacle and the Israelites took that ark with them

wherever they went.

Joshua and the priests took the box, called the ark, and walked in front of the people. When the coats of the priests carrying the ark touched the water of the Jordan River, the water parted just like it did when they escaped Egypt 40 years before at the Red Sea.

Then Joshua and all the Israelites walked across the dry bottom of the river and started went into the Promised Land that God gave to them.

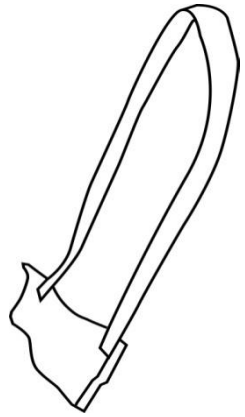
After crossing the Jordan the Israelites built an altar and thanked God for taking care of them.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why did God not let the people who came out of Egypt go into the Promised Land?
- How many years did the people have to stay in the wilderness before the Israelites could enter the Promised Land?
- How did the people get food and water for 40 years while they were in the desert?
- When the people were finally ready to go into the Promised Land they came to the Jordan River. What miracle did God do at the river?
- Who was the new leader that God chose to lead the Israelites it the Promised Land?
- Why do we tend to complain so much when God gives us so much?

# David and Goliath

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 17:32-51



What is one thing you ever tried to do where you were really afraid? Maybe it was going on an amusement ride or hiking a very narrow and high trail. Or maybe it was trying to ski down a hill for the first time. When we do something that we have never tried before it can be frightening.

There was a time when a very young boy was not afraid, but if that boy were me, I am not so sure I would be as brave.

The Israelites were going to battle against their enemy, the Philistines and the Philistine army had one warrior, Goliath, who was a giant.

All the Israelites were very much afraid of Goliath and the Philistine army. Every day the Philistine warrior Goliath came to the front of the battle and made fun of the Israelites. He would called them all sorts of names and intimidated them.

One day Goliath called to them to send out their best warrior to fight him. Goliath even said they should just have a one on one fight and whoever wins the other army would surrender.

The Israelites did not know what to do. They had no warrior who

could stand up to Goliath and the Israelites were also not trusting in God's strength but in their own power to defeat their enemy.

David was a young boy and came out to the battle to bring food for his brothers who were Israelite warriors. When David came to his brothers they made fun of him for even coming to the battlegrounds and were angry with him and told him to go home. David was a shepherd boy and the brothers told him to go back and babysit the sheep. David reminded his brothers that they should be trusting God to win the battle but the brothers paid no attention to him at all.

King Saul heard about that David had come to the battlefield and called for David to meet with him. David told King Saul that he could fight the giant, Goliath. Saul looked at David and did not think he looked like a warrior so he asked David why he thought he could defeat Goliath. David told King Saul he was pretty strong and had fought off bears and lions while watching the sheep for his father.

King Saul had no other no one else volunteer to go and fight Goliath and had no other idea how to defeat the giant warrior so he told David he could go against the giant and try to defeat him. Then King Saul told his aides to put his armor on David. When they put the armor on David he could not move because he was so small and the armor was so heavy. He took the armor off and told King Saul he did not need armor and would fight Goliath in the name of the living God.

On his way to the battlefield David stopped at a stream and picked



up five smooth stones. David said to the Israelites and to the Philistines, “*Today the battle is the Lord’s and I will defeat this enemy in the name of the living God.*” Then David ran toward Goliath who was coming after David with his sword. David took one stone and put it in his sling and flew off the stone at Goliath. The stone hit Goliath right in the center of his forehead and he fell to the ground and was instantly dead.

The rest of the Philistines were now afraid of the Israelites because their one most fierce warrior was dead. When they saw what had happened they all turned and ran. The Philistines had been defeated by one small boy who had complete faith and trust in God.

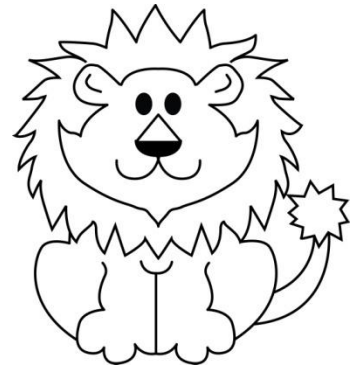
David reminded the Israelites that it was God who gave him the strength and power to kill the giant Goliath.

### **Story Question and Discussion:**

- What does it really mean to be brave or have courage?
- Did David’s job, when he was younger, help him when he was older?
- What are some of the jobs you do now that God might use to train you for something when you get older?
- How many stones did David pick out of the stream?
- Did David walk into the battlefield to face his enemy, Goliath?
- What did David say as he ran to meet Goliath?

# Daniel Trusts God

**Scripture:** Daniel 6:1-28



Many years after David successfully defeated the Philistine army the Israelites became very powerful and conquered many towns and cities. Years past and it wasn't long before God's people soon forgot about all the things God had done for them and began to worship other gods and marry people who did not believe in the true God. As a result of their sin God had them captured by the Babylonians who were not a godly people and did not believe in or worship the true God.

The Israelites became slaves to the Babylonian king and the Babylonians. It was because the Israelites had been unfaithful to God that allowed them to be captured to teach them a lesson.

The king wanted to take some of the young men from the Israelites and teach them the way of the Babylonians so they could influence their people to follow the king and the Babylonian ways. Daniel was one of the Israelite young men who were in captivity and Daniel and three other very talented and bright young men were hand picked for service to the Babylonian king. Daniel was only sixteen years old when this happened.

Daniel and his friends were faithful to God and continued in the king's service. The king sent them to the best schools and provided them the best care and the best food.

Soon Daniel had become a governor in all of the Babylonian empire because of his faithfulness to God and the favor that God showed to Daniel. Daniel had been used by God for many years to give the king messages but one day the king died because he had failed to follow the messages that Daniel gave him from God.

A new king came to power. His name was king Darius and he also favored Daniel and gave him a high position. But the other leaders were jealous of Daniel and plotted against him. As much as they tried, they couldn't find anything wrong with Daniel. Daniel was continuously faithful in worship and prayer to God.

So the leaders made a plan and flattered the king. They convinced him to sign a decree that stated all prayer must be to the king. The king was foolish and signed the decree. Daniel refused to follow the king's decree and continued to worship God in view of the public. The leaders knew Daniel would do this so they accused Daniel of breaking the decree and went and told the king what Daniel had done.

King Darius was sorry he had made the rule because he had no other choice but to punish his friend Daniel. It was the law and the law could not be changed. As much as it hurt the king to do this, he had Daniel thrown into the lion's den because he did not follow the king's new rule.

King Darius could not sleep all night. He was sure his friend Daniel

was dead. The next morning the king ran to the den but when he got there he found that Daniel was safe. God closed the mouths of the lions.

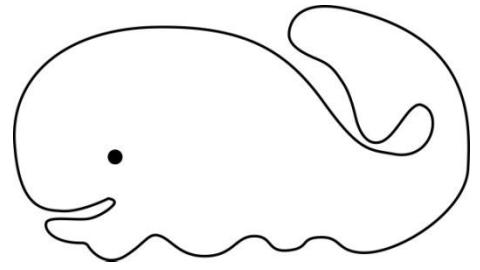
King Darius commanded everyone to worship Daniel's God. Then king Darius had those who had plotted against Daniel thrown into the lion's den. This time the mouths of the lions were not closed.

**Questions and discussion:**

- Why were the leaders jealous of Daniel?
- How did God protect Daniel in the lion's den?
- How did Daniel's faithfulness affect Babylon?
- How can we remain faithful to God when it is difficult?

# Jonah Disobeys God

**Scripture:**      Jonah 3:9



Where do you go when you want to hide from somebody? This story is about a prophet who tried to hide from God. Prophets were people God used to give messages to people.

Jonah lived in city of Galilee, which was at the sea and far away from Galilee was the city of Nineveh. The Ninehvites were people who did many evil things that were against God's laws. God wanted the Nivevites to stop living in such disobedience to Him; otherwise He was going to destroy the whole city. God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and tell them they were going to be judged by God. Jonah did not like the Nineveh people and thought they deserved to be punished and he did not think that God really would destroy the Ninevites because God is so loving and forgiving. So, instead of obeying God, Jonah made up his own mind and decided he would not go to Nineveh and instead he went the opposite way on a ship bound for Tarshish, which was the opposite direction from Nineveh.

While Jonah was on the boat, God sent a terrible storm and the boat was about to be crushed by the crashing waves. The captain and all the crew of the ship tried to find who was to blame for the storm. They thought somebody's god must have caused the storm. As the storm raged on the captain found Jonah hiding and sleeping in the bottom of the ship. The crew thought it was Jonah's God who

must have created the storm and they asked Jonah where he was going and what he had done to cause his God to bring this terrible tragedy on them. Jonah admitted He was the reason for the storm and told them about his disobedience to God.

Jonah then said they should throw him overboard in order to save the ship. The crew of the ship didn't want to hurt Jonah because they had feared his God and so they tried to save the ship by throwing things overboard and paddling. But the storm only got worse, and it wasn't going well for the crew. Finally they decided they would throw Jonah overboard and see if that worked. When they did, the storm stopped immediately and the ship was safe. Then the entire crew believed in Jonah's God!

Jonah, meanwhile, was not a good swimmer and began to sink, but God wasn't done with Jonah yet. God sent a great fish to save him and the Bible tells us the big fish swallowed Jonah and he stayed inside the great fish for three days. While Jonah was in the great fish he prayed to God and told God he was sorry for not obeying God's directions. Then he promised to do what God had told him to do.

God had compassion on Jonah and made the great fish spit Jonah up on dry land. God told Jonah to now go to Nineveh and warn the people there. This time Jonah obeyed. In fact, what usually took three days to travel Jonah did in one.

When he arrived in Nineveh he told the Ninevites they were going to

be destroyed because God was angry with them for disobeying God's laws. Then the people of Nineveh believed in God, asked God to forgive them, and they changed their disobedient ways. God again showed his compassion and did not destroy the city.

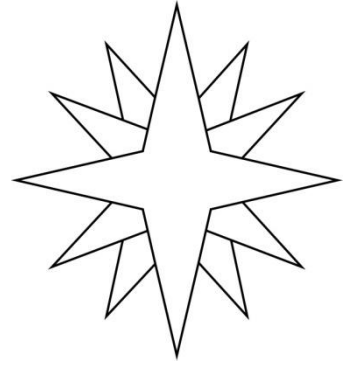
Jonah knew this was going to happen and now he was angry because he thought they still deserved to be punished. God tried to teach a lesson of compassion to Jonah with a plant. Since Jonah was hot, tired and miserable after his journey to Nineveh, Jonah said it would be better if he just died. So God had compassion for Jonah and had a plant grow overnight that gave him shade. Jonah was relieved and felt comfort. God then sent a worm that destroyed the plant and Jonah was very mad that he lost the shade. God taught Jonah a lesson and said to Jonah he was more concerned about himself and about being comfortable from the heat than he was about all the people in Nineveh where more than 120,000 were about to be destroyed for disobeying God. God wanted Jonah to learn to have compassion on others and Jonah did learn that lesson.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- Why did Jonah disobey God?
- How did God show compassion to Jonah?
- What did the Ninevites do after Jonah told them God was going to destroy them?
- How can we show compassion to people we might not like?

# Jesus is Born

**Scripture:** Luke 2: 1-19



Many years before Jesus was born God had promised the Messiah, His Son, Jesus, would come to earth. During the Old Testament times God had made a way for people to have their sin forgiven by making sacrifices of animals and birds at the temple. The blood from the sacrificed animals was a symbol of the way God would forgive sin. Do you remember in the story of Adam and Eve how God had to kill animals and make clothes for Adam and Eve? God had to kill animals as part of taking care of what happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed and sinned. From that time on the sacrifices of animals was a reminder to God's people of their sin and how much God loved them and was ready to forgive them.

For many years this was how sin was forgiven. But God had promised that one day He would send His Son, Jesus to earth to become the once and for all time sacrifice for sin so the Old Testament way of taking care of sin would not have to be done any longer. This was all part of God's plan.

One day an angel came to a young girl named Mary and told her that she would be the mother of God's Son. An angel also came to Joseph who was going to marry Mary and told him that Mary would have a child and that they should name Him Jesus. Both Mary and Joseph were amazed at what the angel said. Mary soon found out



she was going to have a baby just like the angel had told her.

At about that time the ruler of the land, Caesar, made an announcement that everyone should go to their town where they were born and register in their hometown. Caesar wanted to know how many people lived in the land because he wanted everyone to pay a tax.

By this time Mary was very pregnant with her baby and the trip was going to be very hard for them to make. Mary and Joseph went on their journey toward Bethlehem because that was Joseph's hometown where he and Mary had to sign their names in the town book. When they got to Bethlehem Joseph could not find any place to stay overnight. Finally they found a place to keep warm in a barn in back of a small inn (or hotel.)

During the night Mary had her baby. Because they were staying in the barn there was no baby crib, Mary and Joseph wrapped the baby in a small blanket and laid him in a manger where they put hay for the cows and donkeys.

An angel came to shepherds who were taking care of sheep outside of town. The heavens lit up with bright lights and there was singing coming from heaven. The shepherds fell down on the ground because they were so afraid. The angels told them not to be afraid and then told them great news. They told the shepherds that a Savior, Jesus, had just been born and if they went into town to the inn they would find the new King there.

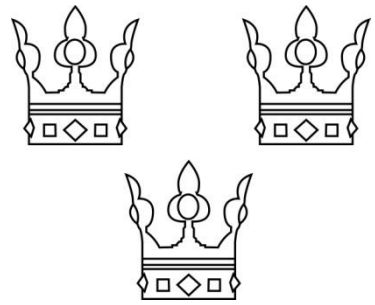
The shepherds hurried into town and found Jesus just as the angel had told them. Soon many others had heard that Jesus had been born and they were happy to hear the wonderful news.

**Questions and discussion:**

- How was sin forgiven in the Old Testament?
- What promise did God give His people in the Old Testament about His Son Jesus?
- What was so special about the baby Jesus?
- Why did Joseph and Mary have to go to the town of Bethlehem?
- Why did Mary and Joseph have to sleep in the barn?
- What was special about the baby Jesus?
- How did the shepherds know about Jesus being born?

# The Visit of the Magi

**Scripture:** Matthew 2:1-12



Some time after Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wise men, who were like college professors, who lived in a far away land, knew the scriptures and knew about the prophecy that one day the Messiah, Jesus, would be born in a town called Bethlehem. They also knew the sign that the Savior had been born would be a bright star in the sky that was never there before. The light from that star would show the way to where Jesus and His parents lived.

One day these wise men studied the heavens and saw the bright star appear. The wise men knew the Messiah had been born and so they traveled many miles and came to visit Jesus. These men were not only very wise but they were wealthy and brought expensive gifts for the Messiah. The wise men knew Jesus was a special King and wanted to worship Him.

Now, when Jesus was born Herod was the king in the land. When King Herod heard the wise men had come to see a new King he was worried. He was afraid that another king might want to take over his kingdom so he made a plan to kill the baby Jesus. King Herod told his priests and scribes to find out where baby Jesus was supposed to be living. The priests and scribes read the scriptures and told King Herod Jesus was supposed to be born in Bethlehem.

When the wise men came into the city where the king lived, the king sent word to the wise men that he wanted to visit with them. The wise men came and met with the king. The king was very interested and asked a lot of questions of the wise men. He told the wise men he wanted to know where this new king was so he could also go and worship him too. Now, this was not true at all. The king said this to try to trick the wise men to go and find Jesus and come back and tell him where Jesus was living

The wise men did not know what the king was thinking, so they went on their way to find Jesus. If they found him, they would go back and tell the king where Jesus was living. They continued to follow the nighttime star and soon they came to the house where Jesus and His parents were now living. They met Joseph and Mary and gave them gifts to honor Jesus as the promised Messiah, the Savior of the world.

The wise men gave Jesus gold, frankincense and myrrh, which were all very expensive presents. These gifts showed Jesus was a special King, He would live his life for others, and one day He would die on the cross for the whole world's sin.

After their visit to Jesus, they were so excited and ready to go back to King Herod and tell him they had found Jesus. But that night, when they were sleeping, God warned the wise men in a dream not to tell Herod where Jesus was. God told the wise men that Herod only wanted to know so he could kill Jesus.

King Herod's trick did not work on the wise men. The wise men began their journey and instead of going back to the king they took a different way home.

Then in another dream an angel told Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, that Jesus was in danger and that they should leave and go to Egypt where they would be safe. Joseph quickly packed up their belongings and he took Mary and Jesus to Egypt to keep them safe.

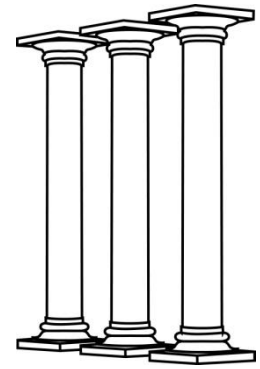
When the wise men did not return, King Herod was very really angry. He called for his servants and the captain of his guard and gave orders that all the baby boys in Bethlehem should be killed. So the guards went throughout the city looking for baby boys and when they found them, they did kill many babies. But because Joseph listened to the angel sent from God, Jesus was safe.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why did the wise men want to visit Jesus?
- What did King Herod do when he found out Jesus was born?
- What did the wise men do when they saw Jesus?
- Why did the wise men take a different way home?
- How did God keep His promise to keep Jesus safe?
- Why was it important for Jesus to be safe from King Herod?
- How does God keep you safe every day?

# Jesus in the Temple

**Scripture:** Luke 2:21-40; 41-52



Have you ever been in a large store and hear an announcement that a small child has been lost in the store? Sometimes when people go shopping moms and dads will shop for different items and agree to meet at a certain place and time. Or sometimes parents will tell their children to stay near them when they are shopping and not be out of their sight. Whenever families are in a large crowd of people, even like a sports game at a stadium, it is easy for people to get lost from each other. A very similar thing happened with Joseph and Mary and their son, Jesus.

Joseph and Mary raised Jesus and taught Him to follow the Law of Moses. God's law required families to worship at the temple for certain festivals. Festivals were very important times for the Jewish people as these were times when they all got together and celebrated the things that God did for them. It was something like our celebrations of Christmas and Easter when we remember special things God does for us.

Every year Jesus' parents took him with them to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. When Jesus was 12 years old He went with His parents and many other relatives to Jerusalem for this annual celebration. There was a huge crowd of people there and along with Joseph, Mary and Jesus there and the other family members, Jesus' aunts, uncles and cousins.

After the Passover feast Joseph and Mary and the other relatives began to return home. Jesus was not with His parents when everyone started on their way back to their hometown and Joseph and Mary thought Jesus was traveling with his cousins and aunts and uncles. After a full day of travel, they found out that Jesus was not with them. They thought Jesus had gotten separated from them and the other relatives and had been left behind in Jerusalem. So they went back a full day travel to find Jesus.

When they got there they searched the entire city and finally found Jesus inside the temple. He was talking with the temple teachers about the things of God and asking them all sorts of questions. The Pharisees and other religious leaders were amazed at how much Jesus knew about the law and the questions He asked.

Joseph and Mary were so upset because they thought they had lost Jesus. When they found Jesus, Mary said to Jesus, *“Jesus, why have you done this to us? We were so worried about you; we thought we had lost you.”*

Jesus answered His mother and father, and said, *“Why were you worried? Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?”* His parents did not understand what Jesus said to them.

Then Jesus left with His parents and they returned to Nazareth and Jesus was obedient to His mother and father. Jesus grew strong and wise and God was pleased with Him.

**Questions and Discussion:**

- Where did Jesus go when he was 12 years of age?
- What was He going to do?
- Why was He in the temple?
- Why were Mary and Joseph worried?
- What was Jesus answer to his parents?
- What do you think Jesus meant by His answer that He was in His Father's house?



# Jesus is Baptized

**Scripture:** Matthew 3:13-15 / Luke 3:1-22



When something exciting is happening or going to happen often the news is announced and many people go to see what is happening for themselves. Many years ago the news told of a hurricane and very high waves that were coming to an island that was connected to the mainland by just one bridge. That island was a very large summer vacation community with many homes and beautiful beaches. In spite of warnings, hundreds of people went to the beach to see the hurricane waves. The land was very narrow on that island, only a few hundred feet from the ocean to the back bay.

As the hurricane came the waves got larger and larger and the water got higher and higher. Soon the one and only bridge back to the mainland was covered with water and cars could not return. Those who had come to see the hurricane were stranded on the island. When the full force of the hurricane hit, rescue boats could not reach the people and hundreds of people perished. All because they heard the news and wanted to see what was happening and they did not realize the danger.

John the Baptist was a special person. He was telling the news about something exciting that was going to happen. People flocked by the thousands to go and hear what he was saying. Now, these

people were not in danger, but they came to hear him even though they had no idea what he was telling people. They had just heard from others that this was an exciting event

Even before he was born God had a special job for John the Baptist to do. As John the Baptist grew up he went and lived in the desert where God prepared him for his special job. Jesus was almost the same age as John and God had planned for John to preach about Jesus being the promised the Messiah who would take away the sin of the world.

John was telling people to stop disobeying God and be baptized to show they were living a new life and now following God. One day, while John was preaching for people to stop disobeying God, many were asking him what they should do. John told the people to stop being selfish and share what they have with the poor. He told the tax collectors to be honest and not take extra money from people. And John told the soldiers not to oppress people, or accuse them falsely and to stop complaining about their wages.

John told the crowd that he baptized with water but the Messiah would come and baptize those who believe in Jesus with the Holy Spirit and fire. Soon Jesus came to the place where John and the crowd had gathered. John looked and saw Jesus coming and announced to the people that this man was the promised Messiah. Jesus told John to baptize Him. John baptized Jesus and as soon as Jesus came up out of the water the heavens opened and the Sprit of God came and rested on Jesus in the form of a dove. (Make

sure you explain this is a bird) Then a voice from heaven announced, “*This is My Son and I am pleased in Him.*”

After Jesus left and went to the wilderness to prepare for his ministry and to confront Satan who would try to stop Jesus from doing what God send Him to earth to do. Jesus had an important job to do but John the Baptist also had an important job too. It was John’s job to announce the great news that Jesus had come.

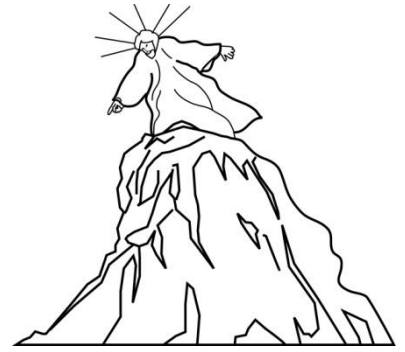
In the story of the hurricane many people died when they went to see about what they heard. In this story, hundreds and thousands of people found new life because of what John the Baptist announced and told people who came to hear what he had to say.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- Does God have a special job for everyone?
- Why is it that some people may not do the job that God had wanted them to do?
- What do you think the crowd thought when John announced that Jesus was the promised Messiah?
- What do you think the people did or said when the heavens opened and God announced who Jesus was?
- What do you think is God’s special job for you?

# Jesus is Tempted

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:1-11



Did you ever think you were all alone and got surprised when you found someone standing right in back of you? Or, were you ever reading a book or playing by yourself in your room and everything was quiet and someone jumped out of the closet and surprised you? Here is a story of when Jesus wanted to be alone but someone else was there.

After John baptized Jesus, Jesus began his ministry. When Jesus was baptized it was God's way of announcing to everyone that Jesus was really His only Son and that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus was the Saviour that was promised over 500 years before He was born. But God also knew and Jesus also knew that a day was coming when he would be the final sacrifice for everyone's sin. Jesus knew He would die on a cross, but also that Jesus would rise from the dead. Jesus would not have it easy because Satan was waiting in the background to see if he could stop Jesus from doing what He came to earth to do.

In order for Jesus to get ready to go and help many people, He first needed to meet with God. Jesus, God and the Holy Spirit are all God, and they had a special relationship and needed time to be with each other. The Bible tells us that after Jesus was baptized the Holy Spirit led Jesus to a quiet place in the wilderness far away from

everyone. Jesus wanted to be alone with God the Father but there was someone else waiting there too.

While Jesus was in the wilderness meeting with God He did not eat or drink for 40 days. Remember, Jesus came to earth in a human form so he was very tired from not eating. He was physically very weak. Just then Satan, who was also there watching and waiting, came to Jesus. He said to Jesus. *“Are you really God’s Son?”* Satan knew the answer but he was trying to trick Jesus into disobeying God. Then Satan said, *“You must be very hungry. Why don’t you turn these stones into bread if you are God’s Son?”*

Jesus knew Satan’s tricks and Jesus just quoted Bible verses to Satan. He said, *“God’s Word says that people don’t live by just eating bread. They live by believing every word God says.”*

Then Satan took Jesus to the top of the temple in Jerusalem, and said to Jesus, *“If you are the Son of God, why don’t you throw yourself down onto the street below because the Bible says that God’s angels will take care of you. If you jump, God’s angels will lift you up in their hands. You won’t as much as even stub your toe on a stone.”*

But Jesus just said to Satan another Bible verse, *“God’s Word says not to test the Lord your God.”*

Satan was not done trying to trick Jesus. Next Satan took Jesus to a very high mountain and said to him, *“See everything around you?”*

*I will give all this to you if you will just bow down and worship me”*

But Jesus just told Satan, *Get away from me,”* and then he told Satan another verse from the Bible and said, *“God’s Word says, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only. “*

Satan gave up for then and went away and God sent His angels to come and take care of Jesus.

Whenever we are tempted to do something wrong or listen to Satan telling us to do something that we know is wrong, we can remember that Jesus was human, just like us. He was a person and he was also tempted by Satan to disobey his father God.

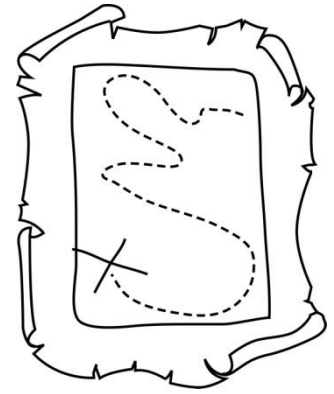
The Bible is the best way to remind Satan that we should obey God. When you wonder whether or not you should do something that you are not sure is right to do, the Bible can help you make the right decisions and do and say the right things.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why was Jesus tempted?
- Why does Satan tempt you?
- When does Satan try to tempt you the most?
- Where can you find power and strength to resist Satan?

# Jesus Begins His Ministry

**Scripture:** Mark 1:21 - 3:1-12



After being tempted by Satan Jesus was now ready to help people who had been under Satan's power. Jesus first went to the synagogue where the Jewish leaders were present and Jesus began teaching. The leaders were astonished at His teaching as He revealed the scriptures in a way they had not before understood. At the synagogue Jesus cast demons out of a man and healed him. The demons even said that Jesus was the Son of God. The religious leaders were amazed that the demons obeyed Jesus.

Jesus became well known because of his teaching and casting out of demons. Wherever Jesus went he continued all day into the evening healing the sick and also casting out demons.

One morning Jesus retreated to a quiet place and prayed. Some of the disciples came and found Jesus and told Him people wanted to see Him. So Jesus took the disciples and went to another town where He continued to preach, heal the sick and cast out demons. A man with leprosy came to Jesus and asked to be healed and Jesus healed him. The man went and told people about his healing and soon such a large crowd gathered Jesus had to leave the city.

Jesus then went to a deserted place outside the city to escape the crowds. But crowds came to Him anyway. Jesus would heal them

and tell them of God's love for them. No matter where people discovered that Jesus was many came to him for healing

So many people wanted to see and hear Jesus that it was difficult for some people who were really sick and could not walk to get to the place where Jesus was teaching and healing. Some men in one town had a friend that was paralyzed. They wanted their friend to be healed so they carried their friend to the house where Jesus was preaching. But there were so many people they could not get in. They had an idea. They carried their friend up to the roof of the house, took the roof tiles and lowered their friend down on a cot with ropes right in front of Jesus. Jesus felt sorry for the man and told him his sins were forgiven.

Many religious leaders who were present challenged Jesus that He should say He forgives sin. But Jesus answered and asked them, *"What is easier, to say sin is forgiven or to heal someone who has been paralyzed his or her whole life?"* To demonstrate the power of God Jesus told the paralyzed man He had just said his sin was forgiven to get up and walk. The man got up and walked. Everyone was amazed at Jesus' power.

Some time later Jesus met Mathew, a tax collector and went with him to his home for a meal. The religious leaders criticized Jesus again, this time for being with such a sinner as Matthew. So Jesus told them a little story to make a point. He told them, *"People who are well do not need a doctor, but I have come for those who need forgiveness and I call people to stop being disobedient to God."*



Later Jesus went to a synagogue where a man sat with a withered hand from birth. It was the Sabbath and the Jewish law stated no one could do any work on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man and the crowd, *“Is it okay in the law to do good on the Sabbath?”* The religious leaders knew they could not answer Jesus and they kept silent. So Jesus healed the man’s arm. Then Jesus told the crowd that the Sabbath was made for man not man for the Sabbath.

People came from all over, from all sorts of towns to hear Jesus preach and to be healed and have demons cast out. Jesus preached about the Kingdom, He helped many people and He cast out many demons. Jesus continued His ministry, preaching about the Kingdom of God everywhere He went and healing people and casting out demons.

The Pharisees immediately got together and talked about how they might get rid of Jesus because He was doing things that were against their rules.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- Why were the religious leaders angry with Jesus?
- What does it mean that the Sabbath was made for people and not people for the Sabbath?
- What did the Pharisees think showed that you were “religious”?

# Jesus the Good Shepherd

**Scripture:** John 10: 1-18



What would you do if someone took you far, far out in the country, miles away from where anyone lived, and just set you down in the middle of a field and drove away.

Well, at first you might be really scared and wonder what to do. Then you would realize you were thirsty and you would have to find some water. Then you would have to find some food so maybe you might find some berries on a bush and eat them. The night would come and you would need to find a place to sleep. Then, if the next day was the same, you would start this all over again, looking for water, food and a place to sleep.

Well, if you were there for a long time you might get pretty tired trying to figure out what to do.

Now, if you were a sheep, you could not even figure anything out, so you would really be lost and would have no idea what to do. Sheep are interesting animals. They cannot take care of themselves. They need someone to take care of them just like parents take care of their children. As we grow up parents teach us how to do more and more things for ourselves. Then, when children become adults they can cook meals, fix the car, mow the grass and do all sorts of things. But until children become an adult they need

someone to help them. Parents are like a shepherd for their children.

Jesus said He was like a shepherd because He takes care of us like a shepherd takes care of his sheep. A shepherd watches over his sheep and protects them. When the shepherd comes to where the sheep are they know the shepherd by his voice. Some shepherds even have names for their sheep like people might name a cat or dog. And when the shepherd calls his sheep by their name, they come to him.

We have names and Jesus knows each of our names too. Jesus even knows more. The Bible tells us that God knows how many hairs are on our head. And, if one falls out God knows there is one less that day. That is amazing, isn't it?

When a shepherd takes the sheep out to the pasture the shepherd leads them and the sheep follow him because they know him and they trust him. The sheep will not follow anyone they do not know.

If the shepherd sees a wolf coming after his sheep he will fight the wolf to protect his sheep. If one of the sheep runs away, the shepherd would make sure the rest of the sheep were safe and he would go and look for the one lost sheep even if it took him a long time until he found it. The shepherd would take the lost sheep back to the pen and make sure the sheep was safe once again.

Jesus is our shepherd and He watches over us and takes cares of

us. If we are ever afraid, like a sheep that got lost, Jesus will help us not to be afraid and to be safe. If we are lonely, Jesus, our shepherd, will be our friend. If we need help, just like the shepherd, Jesus will help us.

It is good to know that we have a shepherd in Jesus just like sheep have a shepherd. With Jesus as our shepherd we do not have to be afraid.

**Questions and discussion:**

- What does a shepherd do?
- If someone tried to hurt a shepherd's sheep, what would the shepherd do?
- If a sheep got away and got lost what would the shepherd do?
- Jesus is our shepherd. If we are afraid what will Jesus do for us?

# Jesus calls His Disciples

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:18-22;  
Matthew 8:9-13; Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19;  
Luke 6:12-16; John 1:35-51; Mark 1:16-20;  
Luke 5:1-11



If you have ever tried to do a really difficult job by yourself it can be very frustrating. When someone is fixing their car they usually need an all sorts of tools and they cannot have every tool in their hand at the same time. If someone is there, even just handing tools, it makes the job so much easier.

If you have to clean up the yard and it is really a large yard, having one or two friends help you makes that job easier. When someone is working on cooking a really big meal with many dishes and pots and pans, it is hard enough just to do all the cooking. Having someone offer to clean up the dishes and pots and pans makes the person cooking feel so much better.

Jesus also had a big job to do. Even though He was God, there is something that happens when you get other people to help you with a task. You get the job done but others learn how to do the job too as they help. Jesus wanted others to learn to do the things He was doing so He began looking to see who He could get to help Him.

After Jesus returned from the desert where He had been for 40 days and was tempted by Satan, He went to the town of Capernaum. Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of

Galilee and found two fishermen, Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. He told them to come and follow Him and he would make them fishers of men. Immediately Simon Peter and Andrew dropped their nets and followed Jesus.

Jesus and the two brothers continued walking and they met James, his brother, John, and their father in a boat by the edge of the sea. These men were also fisherman. Jesus told James and John to come with Him, Simon Peter and John, and immediately they left their boat with their father and followed Jesus and the others.

Jesus and these followers went from town to town where Jesus preached, taught, healed the sick and cast out demons. Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John were with Him and saw all the things that Jesus was doing. They were helping people who came to Jesus for healing but they were also learning.

Later Jesus and His followers got in a boat and returned to Jesus' hometown. As Jesus went through the town He came to Mathew, a tax collector, sitting at his booth collecting taxes. Jesus said to Matthew, "*Follow me.*" Matthew immediately got up from his booth and followed Jesus and the others. By this time Jesus had several men who were helping Him.

One day Jesus went to a mountainside to pray all night. In the morning He called the many men who had been with Him to come and meet with Him. Jesus met with them and selected Simon Peter and Andrew, James and John, Mathew, the other James,

Thaddeus, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Judas and the other Judas. These became the 12 apostles or disciples.

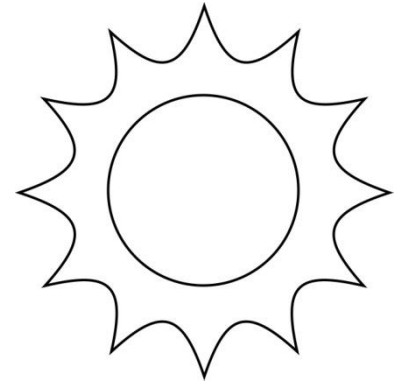
Jesus sent them out to preach about heaven and how to get there. The disciples were to heal the sick and do other miracles. They were not to worry about money. They were followers of Jesus and His helpers. But while they helped they also learned from the Master.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- What did Jesus do before choosing the disciples?
- What kind of men did Jesus choose?
- Why do you think when Jesus told them to follow Him that they immediately left their jobs and followed?
- What were they supposed to do?
- What did Jesus mean when He told Simon Peter and Andrew He would make them “fishers of men”?
- How do we become followers of Jesus?
- Do you think today God sometimes tells people to stop their jobs and become leaders for Him?
- Do you know anyone that God told to be a special leader for Him?
- As a follower of Jesus, what are we to do.

# The Parable of the Sower and the Seed

**Scripture:** Luke 8:4-8, 11-15



A parable is a story that has two meanings.

A parable can be a story about something that happens in everyday life but there is also a meaning to the story about God. Jesus often taught using parables. He would tell people stories and everyday life but in that story was also a message for them about God or how to have faith and trust in God or another life lesson that people needed to learn. The story of the sower and the seeds is a parable.

Jesus went from town to town and taught about the things of God. The twelve disciples went with Him, as did several women whom Jesus had also healed. He forgave people of their sin or helped them in other ways.

One day Jesus came to one town and began to teach with a parable, a story. Jesus said, *"A farmer went out to the field to sow seed. As he scattered the seed some fell on the path. As people walked along the path they crushed that seed and it did not grow. Other seed fell on rocky soil. It began to grow but because of the rocky soil its roots could not go deep. When the sun came up it burned up.*

*Other seed fell along the sides of the field where there were thorns. That seed began to grow but when it grew so did the thorns and the*



*thorns choked out the good seed and it died.*

*Then other seed fell on good soil. It grew and the sun and rain enabled it to grow strong.”*

The disciples said to Jesus they did not understand the story so He explained it to them. The seed that fell on the path are like those who heard about God and Jesus but they listen to Satan’s lies and Satan steals them away from the truth.

The seed that fell on the rocky soil are like those that hear about God and Jesus and believe what they hear but they don’t study more about God and His Word and soon forget what they learned and follow other religions or other ideas about God.

The seed that fell among the thorns are like those who hear about God and Jesus, believe, but get distracted by things of the world and problems, having “things” and spending money to go different places. They forget about God and think money is more important and soon they too forget about God.

The seed that falls on the good soil is like those who hear about God and are obedient and live a life that pleases God.

Today many people hear about God, Jesus and the Bible. Those who hear these things and trust in Jesus as their Savior, read their Bible, pray, and learn more about God are like the seed that fell on the good soil. They grow strong in their faith and trust in God. No

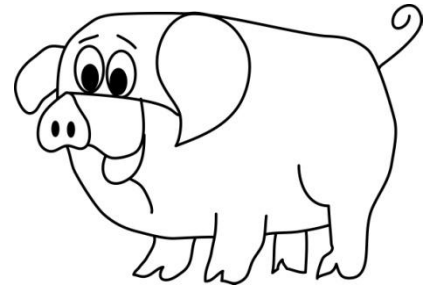
matter what happens they believe in God and their life is filled with accomplishments for God.

When Jesus finished teaching the disciples now understood what the story meant.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- What is a parable?
- Who is a sower?
- Why did Jesus teach using parable stories?
- Why do you think Jesus have to explain about parables to His disciples?
- Discuss people who are like the seed that falls on the path.
- Describe people who are like seed that falls on rocky soil.
- Discuss people who are like seed that falls among thorns.
- Discuss people who are like seed that falls in good soil and what the sun and rain represent in the story.

# The Parable of the Prodigal Son



**Scripture:** Luke 15:11-32

Jesus tells a story of a father who had two sons.

The father had cattle and owned land. When the day would come that the father died all he owned would be divided between his two sons. That is called inheritance – but children do not usually get their inheritance until after their parents have died.

The younger son asked his father to give him his share of the inheritance now. So the father divided his wealth and gave the younger son his share. A few days later, the younger son gathered his belongings and his share of the inheritance and left for a distant country. There he wasted all his money.

After the son spent his money, there was a famine in the country where he was living. The son found himself with no money and very unhappy. The only work the son could find was feeding the pigs. The younger son was so hungry even what the pigs were eating started to look good to him. He wished he could eat as well as the pigs, but no one gave him anything.

Finally he came to his senses thinking the hired help to his father had enough bread to eat, but he was dying of hunger. The son said to himself, *“I will get up and go to my father telling him I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called*

*your son; make me as one of your hired men”*

The son got up and went back home to his father, but while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt love and forgiveness for him. The father ran and hugged him, and kissed him.

The son said. *“Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”* But the father said to his slaves. *“Quickly, bring out the best coat and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and get a calf and kill it and cook it, and let us celebrate and have a party.”* Then the father said, *“This son of mine was dead, and has come to life again: he was lost, and has been found.”* And they began the party celebration.

Now the older son was in the field. And when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He asked one of the servants what was going on. The servant told the older son his brother had come home and his father was having a party to celebrate his safe return. But instead of being happy about his brother returning home, the older son became angry, and was not willing to go in the house. His father came out and began pleading with him.

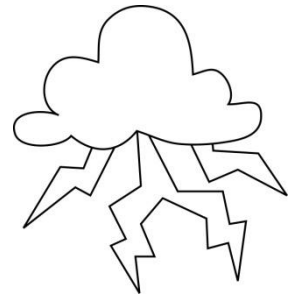
The older son said to his father, *“Look! For many years I have been serving you, and obeying you and you never had a party for me that I may celebrate with my friends. But when your son who wasted away your money on wild living comes home you give him a party.”*

The father told his older son, *“My son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine will one day be yours. But this is a time to be happy and rejoice, for your brother was dead and has come to life again, he was lost and has been found.”*

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- What do you think about a son asking his father to receive his share of his inheritance?
- Do you think the young son had experience with handling money wisely?
- Have you ever bought something with your money only to wish later that you still had the money, so you could buy something else?
- What do you think it would be like to work with pigs?
- How hungry would you need to be to wish you had food as good as the pigs have?
- Did the father treat his son when he returned like a hired servant? Why not?
- How would it feel if you really did something wrong and instead of someone being angry with you he just gave you a big hug?
- This is just like Jesus. Even if we make bad decisions or do something wrong, Jesus is always ready to forgive us and love us. Should we allow our fear when we do something wrong to keep us from God? Why not?

# Jesus is God – the Winds and the Waves Obey Him



**Scripture:** Mark 4:35-41

Have you ever been in a really bad thunderstorm? If you have, you know how scared everyone can be. Even adults can be afraid of lighting and thunder. One thing is for sure, if a storm is really bad, even if in the middle of the night, very few people can sleep through the noise and lighting.

The Bible tells a fascinating story of Jesus, His disciples, and one of the worst storms you could ever imagine. Jesus had been teaching crowds of people all day while at the beach. When He was done teaching He told the disciples to get into the boat and go to other side of the sea.

Jesus was so tired He went to sleep in the back of the boat on a pillow while the disciples sailed the boat across. Soon a strong windstorm began to develop. The wind got stronger and stronger and the waves got higher and higher.

Jesus kept right on sleeping through the storm. The winds and the waves got so bad the disciples thought the boat would turn over and

they would all drown. Jesus was still sleeping through the entire storm. Finally the boat began to break apart and sink and the disciples got so afraid they woke Jesus.

The disciples called to Jesus, “*Master, wake up, do you not even care that we are all going to drown?*” Jesus woke up and He just stood up and just said to the wind and the waves, “*Stop...be calm.*” Immediately the winds stopped blowing and the waves stopped beating against the boat. All was calm.

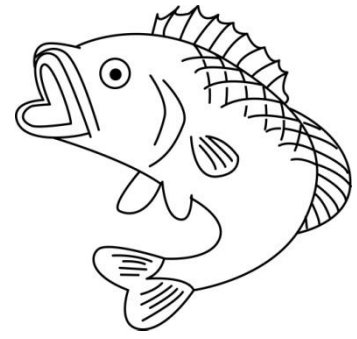
The disciples were amazed. The winds and the waves immediately stopped when Jesus spoke to them. Jesus said to the disciples, “*Why are you so afraid. Where is your faith and trust in Me?*”

**Questions and discussion:**

- Why were the disciples afraid when Jesus was in the boat with them?
- What can we do when we are afraid?

# Jesus Feeds 5000

**Scripture:** Mark 6:30-44



When was the last time you got so busy doing something that you forgot to eat?

Then, when you finally got time, you were so hungry you ate twice as much as you might have normally eaten. There are times when people get so busy having a good time or doing something, they not only forget about a meal, they do not even plan for food because they just were excited about the event.

The Bible tells of a time when Jesus had been traveling around teaching people about God and healing those who were sick. His disciples were excited about what was happening they never thought that maybe a meal would be needed for all the people.

Jesus' 12 disciples had been going from town to town teaching about God and healing people. They came back and told Jesus what they had had been doing. The disciples were so busy they did not have time to eat. There were thousands of people around them.

Jesus wanted the disciples to come to a quiet place with Him to rest. So Jesus and His disciples got into a boat and sailed along the shore toward the town of Galilee. They were trying to go to a place away from the crowds. But people saw them leave and ran along the shore to the place where the boat would be landing.

The people got there before Jesus and His disciples. When the boat



with Jesus and His disciples landed, all the people were right there. Jesus felt sorry for them so He started to teach them about God's kingdom. Jesus also healed many of the people who came to Him that were sick.

It was getting later and later in the day and it was almost time to eat. Jesus' disciples came and told Jesus to send the people back to town so they could get something to eat. Jesus asked Philip, one of His disciples, *"Why don't you feed them?"*

Philip answered, *"We would need lots and lots of food and we would have to work almost a year to have enough money to buy it for them."*

Jesus already knew what He was going to do.

Then another of Jesus' friends, Andrew, told Jesus about a little boy who had brought his own food. The boy had a basket with five little loaves of bread and two small fish. The disciples told Jesus this was not enough to feed all of the people.

Jesus told His disciples to bring the food to Him. The little boy gave his five little loaves of bread and two small fish to Jesus. Then Jesus told His disciples to tell the people to sit down on the grass and put the people into groups. Jesus took the five little loaves of bread and two fish and looked up to heaven. He thanked God for the food and broke the bread and gave it to the disciples to give to the people.

Jesus kept giving the bread to His disciples and they kept giving it to the people to eat. Then Jesus handed the fish to His disciples and they gave it out to the people to eat. There was enough food and everyone got to eat as much as they wanted.

After dinner Jesus' disciples cleaned up what was leftover and they filled twelve baskets. Jesus had fed about 5,000 men. Women and children had eaten too. All of the people said, "*This must be an important person sent from God.*" Jesus was more than just important, He was the Son of God.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- What had Jesus' disciples been doing?
- Why did the people follow Jesus and His disciples?
- How did Jesus and His disciples try to get away from all of the people?
- Why did the disciples want the people to go back to town?
- Why did Jesus ask the disciples to feed them?
- How many men were fed with the boy's food?
- How was Jesus able to feed all of the people with just five loaves and two fishes?
- Does God know what we need before we ask?
- Does God give us what we need today?

# Jesus Has the Power over Evil



**Scripture:** Mark 5:1-20

Sometimes people can be so sick they do not know what they are doing. Sick people can sometimes act very wild so that doctors and nurses or even police officers have to hold them down or give them medication to calm them because they cannot help themselves.

In Jesus time there were people like this who were wild. Some had evil spirits living inside them and the evil spirits were from Satan. It is really sad when people are this sick and especially if no one seems to be able to help them.

One day Jesus crossed the lake with the disciples and as Jesus got out of the boat, a man who lived nearby in the graveyards spotted Him.

This man was wild and was so strong that no one could stop him or hold him because an evil spirit possessed him. He could even break any leg irons or chains that were put on him. He was out of control and he wandered around yelling and hurting himself.

When the man saw Jesus get out of the boat he ran from a distance to Jesus and fell on his knees in front of Him and shouted, "*What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?*"

The evil spirit that was living in the man begged Jesus to promise He would not torture him.

Jesus felt sorry for the man and said to the evil spirit, “*Come out of this man!*” Then Jesus asked the evil spirit his name and evil spirit said his name was Legion meaning “*we are so many.*” The evil spirit begged Jesus not to send them out of the man. Apparently the evil spirits had to be in something that was living.

A large herd of pigs was eating nearby. The demons begged Jesus to be allowed to go into the pigs. So Jesus gave them permission and the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd of pigs, about 2000, went wild and ran down the hill into the lake and drowned.

The caretakers of the pigs ran into town and reported what happened. People from town came out to see for themselves what had happened and saw all the pigs that were dead in the lake. They also saw the man who had been possessed and the man looked normal. He was dressed and he was calm. He wasn't yelling and screaming and they could talk to him and he could talk with them.

You would think the people would praise God for what Jesus had done but instead this made the town's people afraid. Those who had seen what happened to the man and the pigs told the people from town all that had happened. But the town people begged Jesus to leave their area, they were afraid of Jesus' miracles.

The man who had been healed asked to go with Jesus, but Jesus did not let him. Instead Jesus told the man to go home and tell his family and friends how much the Lord had done for him. So the man did. He went and told everyone he met the wonderful thing that God had done for him. People who knew him were amazed because for many years he had just been a wild and crazy man who lived in the graveyards.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- Why were the town people afraid when the man was healed?
- Why did the people want Jesus to leave their area?
- Describe Satan's power.
- Describe God's power.
- How is God's power different than Satan's power?
- Since Satan's power is stronger than your power, how can you resist his power?
- Does God do miracles today?
- If you think yes, give an example.
- If you think no, tell us why?

# Being Born Again –

**Scripture:** John 3:1-17



Did you ever want to know something but were afraid to ask because you didn't want other people to find out you did not know the answer. Sometimes people at a job don't know how to do something but tell people they do and then they break a piece of equipment or make a really big mistake. Other times there are people that have really good educations and are supposed to know a lot. If there is a question about something that they probably should know about and don't, they might not want to ask because then people would know they might not be as smart as everyone thought.

Nicodemus was an important religious leader in the town. He was very educated and everyone thought he was very smart and knew a lot of things. He heard about Jesus and what Jesus was teaching and wanted to know more. Nicodemus knew Jesus was from God and had questions. He really did not want to ask anyone because he was a religious leader and everyone thought he knew a lot of answers to questions.

Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus meant when He was preaching how to become part of God's Kingdom but he did not want other people to think he did not know that answer. To keep anyone from knowing he was meeting with Jesus, he went to Jesus at night. He decided to ask Jesus the question himself about how to

be part of God's Kingdom. Nicodemus said to Jesus he knew Jesus came from God because of the miracles that Jesus had done but he did not yet ask Jesus the question he really wanted to ask.

Before Nicodemus could say anything more Jesus told Nicodemus that to be part of the Kingdom of God he must be born again. Nicodemus was amazed that Jesus knew exactly what he was thinking. Then Nicodemus asked Jesus for help in understanding what Jesus meant about being born again. Nicodemus asked Jesus how anyone who is already born can go back and be born all over. Jesus told Nicodemus a person must be born physically and then born spiritually. Nicodemus just did not understand this and asked Jesus how all of this is possible.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"How can you be a religious leader and not know these things?"* Then Jesus told Nicodemus that if he did not believe the things that He and His disciples were teaching and doing here on earth (such as Jesus' miracles) how then could he believe and understand things of heaven.

Jesus explained to Nicodemus that the Son of Man came from heaven and whoever believes in Him will have eternal life. Then He said that God loved everyone so much that God sent His Son to save anyone from sin who would believe in Him.

Jesus did not say that because people were disobeying God and that they could never be in heaven, He just said anyone who would believe on Jesus as the only Son of God could be forgiven and

become part of God's family. If they believed in Jesus and asked God to forgive them, then they were born again.

Many religions and many religious leaders tell people they have to do work like help the poor, say many prayers, or place fruit or flowers in front of idols or give money to the religious leaders to enter heaven. God does want us to help others and God does want us to give money to help build God's church here on earth, but that is not what gets us into heaven. We only get into heaven when we believe in Jesus as the only Son of God, ask God to forgive us for our sin and then have faith that we are forgiven.

Once we become part of God's family we want to do things for others, not because we try to work our way into heaven but because we love God for what He has done for us.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus at night?
- What does it mean to be "born again"?
- How do some people think they can get into heaven?
- How does Jesus tell us we get into heaven?
- Do we have to be born again to be part of the kingdom of God?



# The Rich Young Ruler – The 10 Commandments



**Scripture:** Mark 10:17-27

If you had millions of dollars what would you buy?  
What can't money buy?

There are stories about people who have very little money and then they win a lottery and became millionaires overnight. They went from being very poor to being very, very rich. Many times people who win a great deal of money really do not know how to handle money and within a few years all their money is gone and they are right back where they started, being very poor.

There are also stories about sports champions who are paid millions of dollars to play football or other sports. Some of these famous players get millions of dollars a year. Not all, but some of these famous sports figures who make millions of dollars also do not handle their fame and fortune well. They buy large houses and many cars. They go on expensive trips and spend, spend, spend. Then after a few years when they can no longer play sports and all the money stops coming in, they have not saved money or planned for the future. They find they cannot keep their houses or cars and boats and soon all those things are taken away because they have no money left to pay for them. Some of these sports players end up also with nothing.

Here is a story from God's Word about a man who had a lot of money.

Jesus was with many people and had just finished teaching about the importance of children. After Jesus finished talking with the children and blessing them a very rich young man was watching all this and came running up to Him and fell at his feet. He was thinking about all Jesus had said and wanted to ask Jesus a question.

The rich man had heard Jesus teaching about heaven and the Kingdom of God and he asked Jesus how he could be part of the kingdom. Jesus knew what the man's real problem was, but first Jesus told him he should just obey the 10 commandments. The young man said to Jesus that he had kept all the commandments.

Jesus told him that is wonderful and then said if he was already obeying God's laws then he should sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor and follow Him. The young man was surprised at what Jesus had told him. He did not expect Jesus would tell him to sell all the things he owned because he was so very very rich. That would mean he would have to give up everything and be one of Jesus' disciples, sleep out under the stars at night and just have food to eat that other people would share.

Immediately the man became very, very sad. He was sad because he realized the great sacrifice he would have to make to sell everything he owned, give it away to the poor and follow Jesus. He had a very comfortable life and would have to give all that up.

Money was more important to him than being a follower of Jesus.

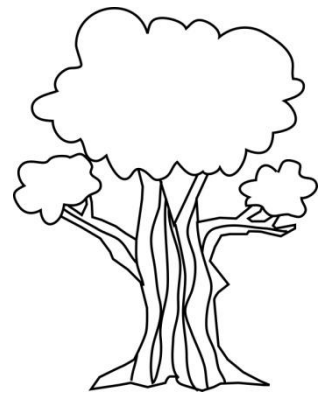
The young man walked away because he was not willing to give up what he had.

### **Questions and discussions**

- Why do you think the young man ran to Jesus?
- What did Jesus ask him to do?
- What decision did the rich young man make?
- Why did he go away sad?
- How can we have eternal life and be part of God's Kingdom?
- Does Jesus require everyone to sell everything they have and give all their money to the poor?
- Why do you think Jesus told this man to do that?

# Zacchaeus Becomes Jesus' Friend

**Scripture:** Luke 19:1-10



A person who does not have even one friend is the loneliest person in the world. God created us to be with other people but in order have friends you must also be a friend to others. To be a friend means you have to take time away from doing what you want to do what your friends want to do. But that is how friendships happen, when you take time to be with others.

In the Bible Jesus met a man who did not even have one friend. His name was Zacchaeus and he was a man that most people did not like. First, because he was a tax collector (explain) and also because he was not fair and would take extra money for himself. Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to his village and that He did miracles (explain miracles). Zacchaeus decided to go into the village to see Jesus and when he got there a large crowd had gathered. Because Zacchaeus was a very short man he could not see over the heads of the people and no one would let him through the crowd to the front where he could see Jesus arriving. As much as he tried, people just stayed in his way and they were not about to give room to someone who was as mean and dishonest as Zacchaeus. Even when he asked people to let him through they

ignored him and just stood in his way.

Zacchaeus was determined to see Jesus but it was obvious that the people in the village were not going to help him. He figured he would just walk to the end of the crowd and then walk in front of the people. But the news of Jesus coming made everyone so excited that just about everyone in the town and come down to the main road to see Him. It was like the biggest parade you ever saw and the line of people was so long Zacchaeus could not even see the end. There was no used trying to get around the crowd, it was just too large.

Zacchaeus did not give up. He thought and thought about what he could do. Then he saw a Sycamore tree by the road and the crowd. A Sycamore tree is very different because it has all sorts of bumps on the tree trunk and the bumps make an easy place to put your feet so kids loved Sycamore trees because they were easy to climb. Zacchaeus saw some other kids in the Sycamore trees high above the crowd so that gave him an idea. Zacchaeus found a Sycamore with no kids in the tree and he climbed the tree. He thought this way he could see Jesus when Jesus walked by.

Soon Jesus came down the street. The crowd went wild. Everyone was calling to Jesus and waving branches at Him to let them know how glad they were he came to their village. When Jesus came

near the tree that Zacchaeus had climbed He stopped right at the place where Zacchaeus was. Jesus looked up in the tree and said *“Hi! Zacchaeus. Why don’t you climb down out of the tree so we can have lunch and I can visit with you at your house?”*

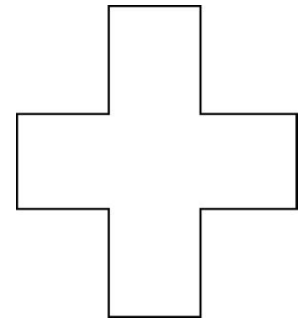
Zacchaeus was shocked. Jesus actually spoke to him and wanted to stay at his home. He climbed right down and he and Jesus went to his home. When they got to this house Jesus told Zacchaeus about the things of God and how God wanted Zacchaeus to live and to be honest with people. Zacchaeus told Jesus he was sorry for what he had done and was going to give everyone back the extra money that he had taken from them. In fact, Zacchaeus said he would give each person back four times what he had taken. Jesus said that this day Zacchaeus became part of God’s family because he showed that he was sorry for disobeying God.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Why did no one like Zacchaeus?
- Why did Zacchaeus want to see Jesus?
- How did Jesus know Zacchaeus’ name?
- What happened to Zacchaeus after Jesus went to his house?
- How did Zacchaeus become part of God’s family

# The Good Samaritan

**Scripture:** Luke 10:25-37



There are many different religions in the world. Some people would tell you it does not matter which god you believe in, as they are all the same god. The Bible tells us that is just not true.

In the Old Testament when the Israelites were in the wilderness, one time they made an idol calf out of gold and bowed down and worshipped it. God got very angry because they were disobeying Him. In the 10 Commandments the second commandment says, *“Do not worship idols and have no other gods before Me”*

Some religions believe you can work your way to heaven by doing good things for others. Just because a person is religious, or prays a lot, or wears special religious clothes does not make them a Christian or follower of the true God and does not get them into heaven. The Bible also tells us that if we are Christians we should want to do good things for others even though we know that what we do does not get us into heaven.

One day a Jewish religious man came to Jesus and said, *“What shall I do to have eternal life and become part of God’s family?”*

Jesus asked the man, *“What is written in the law (the Bible)?”*

The man said, “*You should love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.*” (Lev. 19:18: Deut. 6:5)

Jesus told the man, “*You answered right: Do these things and you will be part of God’s family.*” Jesus knew the man still had questions and Jesus was testing him.

Then the man asked Jesus, “*But Jesus, who then is my neighbor?*”

Jesus told the man this story, “*A man was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and along the road he met up with robbers who stole his clothing and beat him, leaving him on the side of the road to die. A priest (a priest is like a pastor) was traveling the same road. The priest saw the wounded man, but passed him by on the other side of the road.*

*Next a Levite, (he is like a church leader) was also traveling down the same road, saw the wounded man, but he too passed him by on the other side of the road.*

*Then a Samaritan who was on a journey on the same road saw the injured man and felt sorry for him. (Samaritans were people the Jews did not like. They would never talk to a Samaritan or even get near them.) So the Samaritan went to the man who was injured and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. (This was used for medicine in Jesus’ day) He put him on his animal and took*



*him to an inn (hotel) and took care of him.*

*The next day the Samaritan took out some money and gave it to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever you spend, I will repay you when I return.'*

Jesus asked the religious man, “*Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was injured by robbers?*” The man said, “*The one who felt sorry for the injured man and helped him.*” Jesus said, “*Go and do the same.*”

This story also shows us that you cannot tell what a person is really like on the inside by the way they dress on the outside or the job they have or how much money they have.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Who was the Samaritan?
- Why do you think the Priests and the Levites walked past the injured man on the other side of the road?
- Why do you think the Samaritan helped the injured man?
- Can you have the promise of heaven by just being good and doing good things for others?
- Why does God want us to be good to our neighbor?

# Jesus Has the Power over Death - Lazarus

**Scripture:** John 11:1-46



In the first stories of the Bible we read about Adam and Eve. They were created by God and at first they would not have gotten old and died. When God first created the Garden and Adam and Eve the world was a perfect place and there was no death. But God warned Adam and Eve if they ate the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge that they would die. That did not mean they would die immediately, but once they disobeyed God then death came into the world because sin had entered the world and the result of sin is death, both to our spirit and our bodies.

But God had already planned that one day Jesus would not only give all of us a way to conquer sin but that death also would not be the end for us. If we know Jesus as our Savior we not only have our sin forgiven but we have the promise that after we die we will be with God and Jesus in heaven for all of eternity.

When a family member or friend dies people are always very sad because they miss being with them. Remember, Jesus was born as a human so He also had feelings like all of us. Jesus was sad when people sinned and Jesus was happy when He was able to heal people from disease.

There is a story in the Bible about a good friend of Jesus. His name was Lazarus. Lazarus became very sick and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were taking care of him. They were good friends of Jesus too. Mary and Martha knew Jesus could help their brother get well so they sent a message to Jesus to tell him Lazarus was very sick.

Jesus knew Lazarus was going to die and Jesus didn't go right away – He waited two days. The disciples didn't understand that Jesus knew Lazarus was dead and had a plan. Jesus knew God had a special plan for Lazarus and something for everyone to learn about the power of God.

When Jesus arrived there were many friends trying to make Mary and Martha feel better. Martha believed Jesus was God's Son and even though Martha was sad that her brother died she knew she would see him again in heaven because Lazarus believed Jesus was God's Son too.

When Jesus came to Martha's home He told Martha that Lazarus would rise again. Martha sent a message to Mary that Jesus was there and Mary and all their friends came to see. Mary was so sad she cried. Jesus cried too.

Then Jesus went to the grave and told them to move the stone. But Martha didn't want to move the stone. Jesus told Martha to trust Him and she would see amazing things that God could do. Jesus prayed to God and said, "*Lazarus, wake up and come out.*" Lazarus walked out of the cave, surprising everyone. Jesus then

told the friends to unwrap Lazarus from the burial cloths they had put around him and everyone rejoiced because Lazarus who once was dead was now living again.

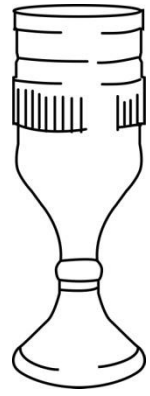
Jesus proved He was the Son of God and had power over death. Many that were there believed that Jesus was God's Son but not everyone. It is amazing that no matter what miracles even happen today that prove that God is real that many people refuse to believe in the one true God.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- Why did Mary and Martha send for Jesus?
- Why did Jesus wait to go to His friend Lazarus?
- What did Jesus tell Martha?
- What did Jesus tell Lazarus to do?
- What did Jesus want the people to know about God?

# The Last Supper

**Scripture:** Luke 22:7-23, Mark 14:12-25,  
Matthew 26:17-29, 1 Corinthians 11:23-32,  
Jeremiah 31:31-34



If you had a lot of friends and were going to move away from where you live and might never return to that place again, what would you like to do before you left? Most people have a going away party. They invite all their friends and family and celebrate their friendships.

Jesus knew the time was coming when He would be crucified and die and would be leaving His friends and family until they would all meet together again in heaven. He remembered the many good times He had with His friends. There was the time Jesus was in Jerusalem teaching at the temple. Many of His friends were there when He taught people about God. Jesus remembered the time He had gone to the temple and overthrew the moneychanger's tables and had driven out those who were using the temple just to make money. He taught people about money and told a story about a woman who gave her last coin and gave everything she had to God.

He remembered how He taught people through parable stories. Even though He did miracles and taught about God, many of the Jews would refuse to believe He was the Son of God and that He would be the center of the coming kingdom.

The Passover day was approaching and Jesus knew this would be a time to be with His disciples so He gave His disciples instructions to prepare for the Passover meal. Jesus sent Peter and John to go and get a room for the Passover and told them to go into the town and find a man carrying a jar. That man would show them the room where they would have the meal. Peter and John went into town and found the man exactly as Jesus said they would find him.

When the Passover meal time came Jesus called His disciples to the room where the meal had been prepared. He told the disciples this would be the last Passover meal He would have with them until they met together again in heaven. He was going to soon be leaving them and even though the disciples were sad that they would not be with Jesus much longer, they wanted to enjoy the meal together.

Jesus took the bread on the table, broke it into small pieces and told the disciples this bread was like His body which would soon be broken for them and for the whole world. He told them to take the bread and eat it. Next Jesus took the wine (juice) and told His disciples this wine was like His blood, which would soon be given when He would die on the cross for the forgiveness of sin. His blood was like the blood of the slain lamb at the first Passover that was sacrificed so that people would be saved from the plague of death. Jesus then told the disciples to take the cup and drink it to remember what He would be doing for them.

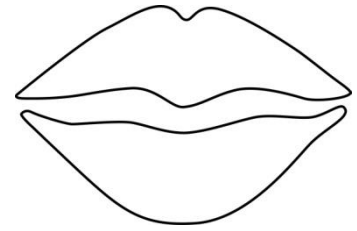
After the meal was finished Jesus went to the olive tree garden to pray. When Jesus prayed He asked God if it was possible that He

not go through the crucifixion as He knew how terrible this would be. But Jesus also said whatever God's will was He was prepared to be obedient to His Father.

**Questions and Discussion:**

- What did the Passover meal celebrate?
- What does communion celebrate?
- If you knew it would be the last time you would be with your friends and you had a meal with them, what would be some of the things you would want to tell them?
- What does Jesus want us to remember about The Last Supper?

# Jesus is Betrayed



**Scripture:** Luke 22:1:5 & Luke 22:39-53

There is a story of a man who borrowed a dollar from his friend to buy a lottery ticket and told the friend if he won he would share the money with him. Well, his ticket did win and he got one million dollars. But, when his friend reminded him of his promise to share the winnings that he got from the dollar he borrowed, the other man said the ticket was his and he was not going to share it.

One of the most disappointing things that can happen to us is have one of our best friends turn against us. Maybe even tell something about us that is not true or promise us something and then not do what was promised. When a friend betrays us (turns against us) sometimes that friendship is gone forever.

Judas was one of Jesus' disciples and he was also the treasurer of the disciple's money. Judas thought money was even more important than friendship. Satan knew this and tempted Judas to go to the chief priests and discuss how he might tell them where Jesus was for money. After the religious leaders said they would pay Judas money, he told the religious leaders they could find Jesus in the garden outside the city. The religious leaders made a plan to have Jesus arrested and gave Judas the money.

After Jesus and His disciples had their last supper they went to the Mount of Olives. (The Garden of Gethsemane) Jesus asked the



disciples to pray to keep from being tempted by Satan. Jesus went ahead of them and knelt down and prayed. When Jesus prayed He knew what was going to happen, that He would be arrested and put on a cross. Even though He was God's Son and knew all these things, He also knew how terrible this was going to be. So He prayed and asked God to not let this happen, but if this was what God knew had to happen; Jesus also prayed and said He was willing to die.

Jesus prayed so hard that His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. Then Jesus went back to His disciples only to find them asleep instead of praying as He had asked them to do. Jesus woke them up and asked, "*Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray so that you will not be tempted by Satan.*" It was dark in the garden because it was nighttime. While Jesus was speaking to His disciples a large crowd with Roman soldiers came to the garden and Judas, the disciple who had betrayed Jesus for money, was among the crowd.

In Bible times it was common for people to hug each other and kiss when they met. Even the men would do this. Judas told the leaders the one he would greet and kiss first would be Jesus so they would know which one was Jesus in the dark garden. Judas approached Jesus to hug and kiss Him. But Jesus already knew what was going to happen and already knew what Judas had done and said, "*Judas are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?*" Jesus meant this to show that one of His best friends had turned against Him.

When the people with Jesus who were also in the garden saw what was happening they said, “*Lord, shall we defend you with our swords?*”

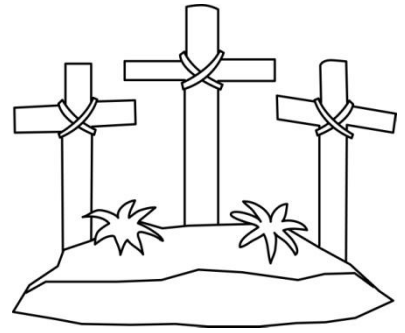
Then one of Jesus’ followers took his sword and struck the high priest’s slave and cut off his right ear. Jesus said, “*Stop! No more of this.*” Jesus then touched the slave’s ear and healed him. Jesus said to the chief priests, elders, and officers of the temple, “*Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me like a common thief?*”

Then Jesus also said, “*While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me to arrest me, but go ahead and do this your way and this is a very dark hour for all mankind.*” Jesus was saying that because of what was going to happen this would be one of the most troubling times in all history of the world – the Son of God was going to be crucified on a cross.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- Why did Judas betray Jesus?
- Why did the religious leaders arrest Jesus at night instead of during the daytime in the temple?
- What kind of men do you think the religious leaders were?
- How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus found them asleep?
- Have you ever let anyone down who asked you to do something? How did you feel?

# Jesus Dies for Us



**Notation:** This story is a challenging story for 4 and 5 year olds. There is considerable difference of opinion as to how much children this age should be taught regarding the crucifixion as well as how much children this age can understand. Keeping in mind that 4 and 5 year olds are still learning to separate fantasy from reality, have difficulty with time, i.e. 3 days between death and resurrection, let alone the ability of children this age to fully understand death and the resurrection. This story can be simply presented to younger children without a great deal of detail and then re-taught at an older age.

**Scripture:** John 18, 19; John 12:12-16, Zechariah 9:9

Jesus had been teaching people about God and doing many miracles. Most people loved Jesus and were so happy that He made many people well who were sick and that He loved people so much. But there were some people who did not like Jesus because He told them they were disobeying and not following God.

One day Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem where He had been many times before teaching people about God. When people heard that Jesus was coming they came out on the road to greet Him. Many people and children even took branches from palm trees and when Jesus came down the road riding on a donkey they called out “*Hosanna*” which means they were thankful to God for sending His

Son to earth.

Over 700 years before Jesus was born, a prophet of God said the Messiah, Jesus, would come riding on a donkey. What the prophet said happened that day as Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey just like the scriptures described and this is a reminder to us that Jesus really was the Son of God.

Still there were other people who did not like Jesus. When they saw people waving branches and thanking God they got angry. There were so many of the religious people telling the Roman leaders to have Jesus killed that the Roman leaders finally agreed and let them put Jesus to death.

After Jesus died His friends put him in a cave and buried Him. They put a large rock in front of the cave. This all happened on a Friday. Jesus was in the cave three days. The Roman leaders put guards at the tomb so that no one could steal Jesus' body and then say He had come back to life on the third day like He said he would.

On Sunday Jesus' friends came to the place where He was buried and found the rock was rolled away from the cave. The Roman guards were also gone. They looked inside and Jesus wasn't there but an angel was inside the cave and told Jesus' friends that Jesus was no longer dead but alive. God had brought Jesus back to life.

Jesus' friends ran and went and told the disciples and others. The friends came to the cave and also saw that Jesus was gone.

Later Jesus' friends had gathered together to have a meal. While they were eating Jesus came to meet with the disciples and He also had a meal with them. When they saw Jesus eating food they knew He was alive and was real. They were not dreaming, their friend Jesus had come back to life just like He said he would and exactly how the scripture prophecies had predicted.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

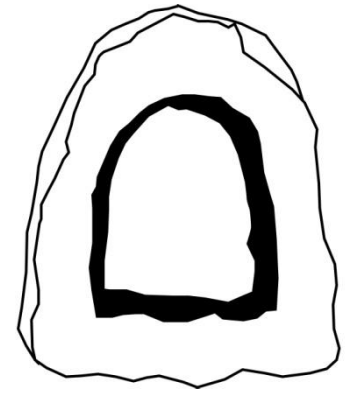
- Why did children and adults come to the road and wave branches when Jesus came into the town?
- Did everyone love Jesus? Does everyone today love Jesus?
- Why did some people not like Jesus?
- What happened after Jesus died? Where did they put his body?
- What did Jesus' friends do when they came to the cave and found out that Jesus was not there?
- How did the disciples know that Jesus was really alive?

### **For older children**

- Why was it necessary for Jesus to die?
- What was so important about the fact that Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey?
- Why do you think made people welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with palm branches and 5 days later yelling to have Him killed?

# Jesus Conquerors Death and Satan

**Scripture:** John 20:1-18, Genesis 3:15



When you read the Bible you find there are many verses in the Old Testament that mention about Jesus, the Messiah, one day coming to earth. Many of the Old Testament verses or prophecies were written around 700 years before Jesus was even born. Yet all these prophecies came true. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Jesus came riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, Jesus was crucified, and Jesus rose from the dead after three days. All things written about Him hundreds of years before Jesus ever came to earth happened just like the Bible said they would. These are all proof verses that Jesus was really the Son of God. But many of Jesus' friends did not remember that these scripture verses had all talked about Jesus.

Now Mary Magdalene was a woman who had been possessed by many demons. She had previously had the demons cast out and was grateful to Jesus and His disciples for the freedom she now had. After Jesus was crucified and buried, Mary went to the tomb-cave to remember Jesus who had done so much for her.

It was three days after Jesus died that Mary went to the place where Jesus was buried. When she got there she was surprised to find the stone rolled away and to find that Jesus was no longer in the cave. Mary thought someone had taken Jesus body and she

was so upset she began to cry. While Mary stood there crying she saw two men who were surrounded by bright light. She was so confused she did not even know they were angels. They asked her why she was crying and Mary told them that someone had taken Jesus' body away and she did not know where they had taken Him.

All of a sudden she was startled when she heard a voice behind her. She turned around and looked and it was Jesus, but she did not recognize Him. She thought it was the man who took care of the graveyard.

Jesus said to her, "*Why are you crying?*" She said to Jesus, (thinking He was the gardener) "*...if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put Him.*"

Then Jesus just said her name, "*Mary.*" At one she knew exactly that this was Jesus, the Messiah and she said, "*Teacher!*"

Mary was so excited she ran and told the disciples what she had seen and that she had talked with Jesus. She told Simon Peter and John, "*The Lord is not there. I found the stone rolled away.*"

Peter and John had a race to the tomb and saw for themselves and then returned to the city to tell the others that Jesus had come back to life. When the other disciples had heard that Jesus was no longer in the tomb they closed themselves into a room because were afraid people would say they had stolen Jesus' body.

But they all wondered where Jesus had gone. Then He appeared to them right there in the room and the disciples now knew for sure that Jesus had come back to life.

There was talk all over Jerusalem, that Jesus' body was gone from the tomb. Some people said He had come back to life like He said He would and others said His body had been stolen so that people would think He came back to life. People were very confused.

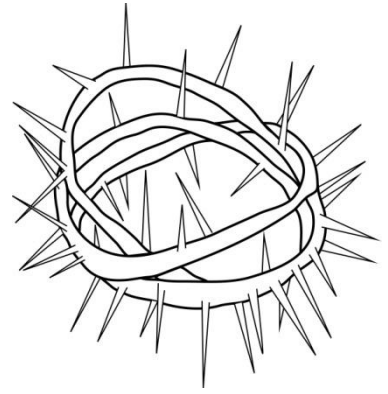
In the book of beginnings, Genesis 3:15 tells us of a promise. That promise says that Jesus would one day conquer over Satan's plan. Satan did not want Jesus to come back to life. When Jesus was crucified and died, Satan thought he had won his battle with God and that Jesus was now dead. But when God raised Jesus from the dead this was proof that God had final power over Satan.

### **Story Questions and Discussion:**

- Why was Mary upset after arriving at Jesus' tomb?
- What did Peter and John do?
- Why did the disciples hide in a room?
- Why were they surprised at Jesus' visit to them?
- Why was Satan disappointed that Jesus came back to life?
- What does it prove when something is stated hundreds of years before an event happens?



# Jesus Is Crucified and Rises from the Dead



**Scripture:** John 3:16, Romans 3:23

What is so important about Jesus dying, being buried and coming back to life? Remember that question.

Did you ever hear a mother or father tell a three year old to do something and that little boy or girl said, “No”? Even when a two or three year old disobeys, that is sin. The Bible tells us that everyone is born with sin. Sin is when we do something wrong and disobey the way God wants us to live. God does not want us to sin but we sin when we lie, disobey, or take things that are not ours. The Bible tells us that at some time all of us have sinned or disobeyed God.

There is a story about a younger brother who was in a store with his older brother. The younger brother saw a beautiful knife; just like the knife he always wanted but he did not have enough money to buy it. When the shopkeeper wasn’t looking he took the knife and put it in his pocket. His older brother was watching and saw what happened. When they got home the younger brother took the knife and hid it in the room he and his brother shared.

The next day the mother was cleaning the room and found the knife. It was a very expensive knife. She called both boys and showed them the knife and asked where it came from. She knew

they did not have money to buy it. The younger brother did not say anything. Finally the older brother said he took it from the store. The mother was so angry with the older son for stealing and said he was setting a bad example for his younger brother.

Later that day the older brother was punished. He had to work to pay for the knife and he lost all his privileges for an entire month. The younger brother never told his mother that he was the one who stole the knife.

After several days the younger brother asked his older brother why he told their mother he stole the knife and took the punishment. The older brother said, *“Because I love you and did not want you to be punished. It’s okay; I’ll take the punishment for you.”*

Remember the story when Adam and Eve disobeyed and sin came into the world? Remember also that all of us are born with sin inside us? That means we all have disobeyed and sinned. We all have done things that are wrong and displease God. Sin cannot be in heaven because heaven is a perfect place. If we have sin, and we all have sin, we need to have that sin forgiven and taken away before we are ready to be in heaven with God.

God loves us so much that He was willing to do something very hard. He sent His only Son, Jesus to die on a cross for all the sins any of us have ever done. God was willing to have His own Son take all the punishment you deserve just like the older brother took the punishment for his younger brother.

After Jesus died, they buried Him in a cave with a large stone in front of it. Three days later Jesus rose from being dead and came back alive. Jesus is now living in heaven with God the Father. One day He will come back to earth and get all those who have had their sin forgiven and trust in Him and take them to be with Him in heaven, the perfect place where there is no sin. If we know and love God we will be with in heaven forever with God.

What is so important about Jesus dying, being buried and coming back to life? Here is the answer: It was important to know that Jesus took the punishment for our sin when He died on the cross. But when Jesus rose from the dead and came back to life He conquered or won over death and Satan for us. Because of Adam sin came into the world and all of us are born into sin. Because of Jesus our sin can be forgiven and removed and after our earthly death we can live forever with God in the perfect place of heaven.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- Who sins?
- What can we do ourselves to have our sin taken away?
- What did Jesus do for us?
- When Jesus rose from the dead what did he conquer or win over?
- What must you do to one day be with God in heaven?

# Jesus Ascends and Gives the Great Commission



**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19-20

Think of a time when someone asked you to do something for them. Maybe they asked you to help them fix their car, or go to the grocery store for them, or bring something to them.

Sometime a parent might say to their child, “*Could you please clean up your room?*” or “*Could you bring me that \_\_\_\_\_ ?*” Then you didn’t do it right away. You really didn’t disobey, did you? They only asked you if you could do it and you didn’t want to do it, right?

Then they changed their tone a little bit. They didn’t ask you this time, they said it this way instead, “*Go get that job done I told you to do!*” Or, “*Go to the garage and bring me that \_\_\_\_\_!*” This time they really meant business and you probably knew you had better do what they told you to do.

This second way of telling us to do something is called a command. A command is something we have to do, it is not an option, and we don’t get a choice in the matter. When we are commanded we are expected to obey. Jesus commanded us things He expects us to do. He told us things we need to do as believers in Him and we really don’t have an option. We need to do them.

Near the end of Jesus’ time on earth with His disciples, He gave

them a very important command. This command is so important that it is even given a special name. It is called the “Great Commission,” and it is found in Mt. 28:16-20.

In this story in the New Testament Jesus had already died on the cross and had been raised from the dead. He was now with His disciples one last time before He was going to leave them to be in heaven with God. His words here are really important; they give us a purpose as believers in Jesus, something we all need to do.

First, Jesus says, “*All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.*” That tells me that Jesus can tell us what to do and should be the one to tell us what we are supposed to be doing.

Then Jesus commands us as His believers or disciples to do three things:

1. Tell people around the world that Jesus is the only Son of God and encourage them to believe in Jesus.
2. Baptize those new disciples.
3. Teach them everything about Jesus and His commandments.

Jesus assured His followers that He would be with them wherever they went and for as long as they needed. After Jesus spoke to His disciples giving them this *Great Commission*, He went up to heaven. The disciples and others with them watched Him go up and up until they couldn’t see Him anymore. And then Jesus *ascended* (went up) to heaven. We call this event the Ascension!

Jesus is alive today and He is with God in heaven waiting for all believers someday to be with Him. In the meantime He has given us instructions as to what we are supposed to do until He returns. He has given us the Great Commission, the command. It is now up to us to follow His instructions.

**Story Questions and Discussion:**

- What is a command?
- Why should we obey Jesus' commands?
- What three things are we told to do in the Great Commission? Jesus said He would be with us wherever we go and until the end of age as we obey Him in this command. How do you think He can do this if He is in heaven now with God?
- What do we call the event that sent Jesus up to heaven to be with God at His right hand?

# The Holy Spirit Comes and Gives Power

**Scripture:** John 14:15-26, Acts 1:6-8, Luke 24:48-49, Acts 21:4, 41, Ephesians 1:13



Did you ever watch wrestlers on television with big muscles and wonder how strong they are? Or, did you ever see someone who did exercises all the time and really had a strong body with large muscles and wonder how long it took for them to get that way? I can tell you. It takes many, many weeks and even months to get a really strong body. It takes hard work and you cannot eat mostly candy, cake and ice cream and get a strong body and large muscles.

God tells us if we want to be strong and have power as a Christian we need help, sort of like exercising. But God also tells us when we become a Christian and believe in Jesus as God's only Son, we have power right away to go and tell others about Jesus. That power comes from the Holy Spirit who becomes part of us when we put our faith and trust in God.

Jesus told His disciples and others that after He returned to heaven He would send The Holy Spirit to give them power in their ministry. And that is exactly what happened on the Day of Pentecost. Pentecost means "50" and was a feast that was celebrated 50 days after the Feast of Passover. The Day of Pentecost was a time when the Jewish people gathered for the religious feast. Jewish people

had come from all over the region to Jerusalem to celebrate.

The Disciples, who were Jewish, also came together for this feast. The disciples were waiting for Jesus to fulfill His promise that He would send the Holy Spirit to empower them. When the disciples were gathered in the room there was a mighty sound like a rushing wind. The sound filled the entire house where the disciples had gathered. There was an appearance of flames sitting on top of each person in the room.

All at once people began speaking in different languages. There were Jews who heard the commotion and came to the room where these people had gathered. When they came to the room they heard the people speaking different languages yet everyone understood what each was saying. They began to ask each other what this meant. Some who were there said these people speaking different languages were drunk. But Peter stood up and said they were not drunk but that this ability to speak different languages was the fulfillment of Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit would come.

After the Holy Spirit came to the believers in Jerusalem they left the room and right away went and spoke to others about Jesus and many became believers that day. It was the Holy Spirit that gave Jesus' disciples and followers the courage and power to go out and tell others about Jesus.

From that day of Pentecost right up to today, everyone who believes and accepts Jesus as God's only Son and asks God to



forgive them of their sin has the Holy Spirit with them to give them power to live for God.

**Story Questions and Discussion:**

- If you were a superhero or had superpower what would you do with that power?
- The Bible says when we become a Christian the Holy Spirit gives us power. What does the Holy Sprit give us power to do?
- The Bible also says we are witnesses. A witness is someone who has first hand knowledge and tells what he or she knows. When you are a Christian what do you know that maybe others do not know?
- Discuss how we can use the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Why do we need the Holy Spirit?

# Becoming Part of God's Family



**Scripture:** Matthew 18:1-14; John 3;1

How many families do you have? Some children have just one family. And there are other children that have more than one family because one or both of their parents were divorced and they married someone else. Some adults have a family with just one parent because their father or mother might have died or their parent is divorced. Sometimes children are adopted into a new family. And there are some children who live in a house with many children we call an orphanage because both their parents might have died and there was no one else to take care of them

Families can come in all different ways. But no matter what family we are part of we can be part of a second family at the same time. That is very special and so all of us can have two families. We have the family we were born into or the family we live with and if we believe in Jesus we can also be part of God's family. The Bible says anyone can be part of God's family if they believe that Jesus is real and is God's only Son.

Jesus was teaching people many things about God and heaven

when some people asked Jesus how they could be part of God's family. Jesus said if they told God they were sorry for disobeying and if they believed He, Jesus, was the Son of God, they could be part of God's family too. Seems pretty easy, doesn't it?

In another story, a very religious man by the name of Nicodemus came to Jesus very late at night. He asked Jesus how he could become part of the Kingdom of God. Jesus told him that everyone who wants to be part of God's family must be born again. If you remember that story Nicodemus did not understand this. He asked Jesus how anyone could go back and be born all over again. It sounded silly to Nicodemus that a person could be born like a newborn baby again. But when we ask God to forgive us, God forgives us and it is just like starting our life all over again – we “born again” but this time we are born as part of God's family.

The day that Jesus met Zacchaeus he became part of God's family because he believed in Jesus. Zacchaeus said he was sorry for his sin and taking extra money from people when he collected taxes.

It all seems so easy but it is amazing how many people never believe in Jesus, never ask God to forgive them for their sin and consequently never become part of God's family. When you study about people all over the world you find that so many people try to

work their way to God. In some religions they make sacrifices to idols of stone or wood, or have rules that people must follow like praying several times a day. It doesn't matter even if they mean what they pray; they just are required to pray. Still in other religions leaders tell them the only way to heaven is to give money and do good deeds. Some people work their whole life trying to work their way to heaven but the Bible tells us there is nothing we can do, there are not enough good deeds we can do to have our sin forgiven.

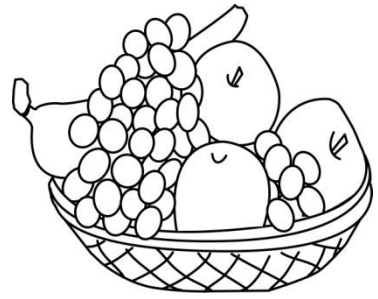
It is the Bible that reminds us that the only way to God and the only way to heaven are easy. We just have to ask God to forgive us. Believe that Jesus was the true Son of God and died for us and then we are part of God's family.

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### **Questions and discussion:**

- What did Jesus tell people they needed to do to be part of God's family?
- How did Zacchaeus become part of God's family?
- How do you become part of God's family?

# The Marks of a Christian – The Fruit of the Spirit



**Scripture:** Galatians 5:16-23

How can you tell if someone is a Christian? Do you think they look different from other people? Do you think they dress different than other people? Is the way a person looks on the outside telling you what they are really like on the inside?

After Jesus had returned to heaven God raised up many leaders to go and teach His instructions to people everywhere on how to live each day. God wanted people to know they could become part of the family of God, not by following rules but by believing in Jesus as the Son of God and following Jesus' teachings.

The apostle Paul was one of the leaders that God specifically told to go out and spread this new message around the world. Many church leaders in Paul's time wanted to add things to Jesus' teachings. They felt that just believing in Jesus and following Jesus' teachings was not enough. These leaders wanted people to have to do things to try to earn their salvation or earn God's love. This is not what Jesus taught and it is not what the Bible teaches.

The apostle Paul reminded people that we become part of God's family by believing and trusting in Jesus as the Son of God as our Savior. And the apostle Paul reminded people that the only way to

become part of God's family is to admit that we have sinned and tell God we are sorry for disobeying Him.

Then, when we believe that Jesus died on the cross for us, we can live for God each day by telling others the Good News of Jesus. We show people that we are followers of Jesus by the way we live.

When a tree is healthy it produces really good fruit. You can tell a fruit tree by the fruit that grows on the tree. You can almost always tell who is a Christian by the things that they do which shows they believe in Jesus and do what the Bible tells them they should do. God says if we love Him and love others, every day we will do things to be kind and help others and show them we love God.

The Apostle Paul said the “Fruit of the Spirit” is what shows that we are followers of Jesus. It is just like the fruit on a tree tells you what kind of tree it is

God also knows that we may sometimes sin and may not always live the way He wants us to live. God provides forgiveness when we sin and when we tell God we are sorry for not obeying Him.

If we try every day to love God and love others these will be things that can help us become more and more like Jesus. This is what Paul said is the fruit or what grows from the Holy Spirit that lives inside us and gives us power to help others.

- **Love** - This means we can love others who sometimes may

be very hard to love.

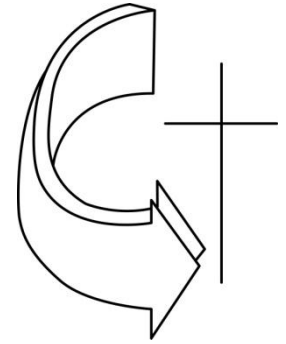
- **Joy** - When we express joy we show that we trust God no matter what happens.
- **Peace** - Those who know God and trust in Him are able to have peace, even when things are not going as they had planned.
- **Patience** - It is not always easy to be patient when people around us want things right away. We can be patient and wait for God to help us with a problem.
- **Kindness** - With the help of the Holy Spirit we can even be kind and forgive people who have hurt us.
- **Goodness** - God also wants us to do good things to help others. That shows that we love God when we love others and do good things for them.
- **Faithfulness** - God wants us to always do the things He wants us to do. That is being faithful.
- **Gentleness** - God wants us to be gentle with others and not speak to them harshly or treat them badly.
- **Self-Control** - With the help of the Holy Spirit, even if we tend to get angry often, God can help us learn self-control.

### Questions and discussion:

- What “Fruit of the Spirit” is the most difficult for you to show every day to others?
- What people do you know who show the fruit of the Spirit each day?

# Saul Becomes a Believer

**Scripture:** Acts 9:1-19



In some countries if you are a Christian you can be persecuted by the government. That means, if they find you worshipping God even having a Bible they can arrest you and put you in jail. Sometimes governments will even have Christians killed because they hate Christians so much.

Even in countries where they allow all sorts of religions Christians can have a difficult time if there are only a few Christians in a town or a region. Not everyone likes Christians or even wants to be around them because Christians remind them of sin.

During New Testament times Saul was a religious leader who was against the teachings of Jesus and was persecuting Christians. (You may need to explain “persecution”) Paul hated Christians so much he even got letters from the government that gave him permission to arrest Christians and have them put in jail.

One time Saul was traveling to the town of Damascus to persecute believers of Jesus. While he was walking on the road with some of his friends, a bright light came from heaven that shined all around him. The voice of Jesus spoke and asked why Saul was persecuting Him. Saul was blinded by the light and frightened and asked who this was that was talking to him. Jesus said it was He, Jesus.



Saul immediately knew it was the Jesus he had been persecuting people for believing in and asked Jesus what He wanted him to do. Jesus made Saul blind and told him to go to the city and wait to be told what to do next. Saul's friends, who were traveling with him, heard the voice but did not see anyone. They were terrified. The friends led Saul to the city because he was blind and could not see.

After Saul arrived in the city he was blind for 3 more days. During that time he didn't eat or drink either because he was so upset with what had happened to him.

In the same city there was a follower of Jesus named Ananias. He was a disciple of Jesus. Jesus came to Ananias in a vision and told him he had a special task for him to do. He told Ananias to go to the house of Judas and place his hands on Saul to restore his sight. Ananias questioned Jesus because he knew Saul was persecuting those who believed in Jesus and Ananias was afraid to even meet Saul. But Jesus said that Saul was chosen as a special person to carry on the name of Jesus to those who were not Jewish and not to be afraid of him.

Ananias went to the house as he was told and there he found Saul. Saul was still blind and did not seem to be the terrible person as Ananias had heard. Saul's blindness had made him a very humble man and especially after Jesus had talked with him directly.

When Ananias placed his hands on Saul's eyes, Saul's sight came

back and he could see everything. Saul immediately praised God, asked God to forgive him for what he had done and for the way he had persecuted Christians and then Saul was baptized to prove to everyone that he had become a believer in Jesus as the Son of God.

Saul had a real “turn around” experience. One day he hated Christians and was doing everything he could to find them, have them arrested and put in jail. Three days later Saul was praising God, he had become the friend of Christians and now he, too, was telling everyone that Jesus was the Son of God. Saul became a follower of Jesus and His teachings and wrote 13 books of the New Testament.

### **Questions and Discussion:**

- Why was Saul traveling to Damascus?
- Why do you think Jesus blinded Saul with a bright light?
- God chose Saul even before he became a Christian to do a special work for God. Why do you think God chose Saul?
- Did the men traveling with Saul see anything?
- Why do you think Jesus wanted Saul to not see for 3 days?
- What amazing thing happened to Saul?

# Early Christians Tell Others About Jesus



**Scripture:** Acts 2:14, 42-47; 4:1-4;  
5:12—16; 41-42; 5:12-16, 41, 42; 6:7; 8:4-8

In the beginning of this book there was the story lesson about the three parts of God; God the Father, God the Son, Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit. After Jesus ascended to heaven He promised that God the Father would send Himself as the Holy Spirit to be part of believers. God the Holy Spirit would help them do the work of the Kingdom that Jesus had commanded everyone to do. It was going to take a lot of power for Christians to go to the entire world and tell everyone the story of Jesus.

After Jesus ascended to heaven the followers of Jesus were waiting for the promised Holy Spirit to come. On the day of the Pentecost festival the believers in Jesus were gathered together to pray. It was during this time when the disciples were gathered when the Holy Spirit came and the Bible says it was like a mighty rushing wind that came into the room. It was just amazing and this was all a sign from God that His Holy Spirit had come to the earth to give power to everyone who believed and trusted in Jesus.

Peter spoke to many who were gathered and preached to them about Jesus and how they should tell God they were sorry for disobeying Him. Peter preached about salvation and told them how they could believe in Jesus as the only Son of God. After Peter

preached about 3000 people believed in Jesus and told God they were sorry for their sin and disobeying.

Later Peter and John went to the temple and spoke before the religious leaders, called the Sanhedrin. The priests were angry that Peter and John were telling people all they had to do was believe in Jesus as the Son of God and not do all the rules that the priests made up. So they had Peter and John arrested and put in jail.

But many who were there believed what Peter and John were teaching about Jesus. 5000 more of those who heard the story of Jesus confessed their sin and believed in Jesus as the Son of God. By now over 8000 people had become believers in Jesus. And all this happened because the Holy Spirit had come and had given everyone power to tell others about Jesus

The next day Peter and John were released from jail as no one could prove they had done anything wrong. Many of those who accepted Jesus met together in various homes and prayed together and shared what they had with each other. Many new believers brought money to the disciples to give to the poor.

The apostles went out and continued to preach, teach and do miracles, healing and casting out demons. Many of the apostles were arrested and put in jail by the priests but they were released because they were doing nothing wrong. Even some of the Jewish priests accepted Jesus and became obedient to God.

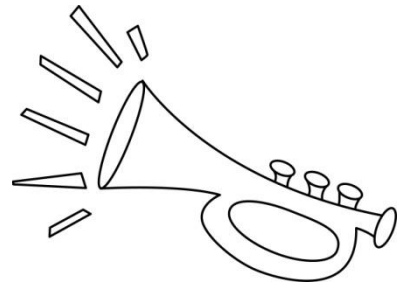
All the apostles and other disciples of Jesus went out all over the region teaching and telling people about Jesus and thousands more accepted Jesus as their Savior.

**Story Questions and Discussion:**

- After Jesus was crucified, why were many people confused about Jesus?
- How did the disciples and apostles get the courage to go out and tell others about Jesus?
- What dangers did the believers face as they went from town to town and preached and taught about Jesus?
- What special power did the apostles and disciples have?
- How can we know how to tell others about Jesus?

# Jesus Will Return

**Scripture:** Matthew 24, Revelation 21



Did you ever hear that someone has said Jesus is coming back to earth next week or on a certain date? If you did, do not believe it. The Bible tells us that no one, not even Jesus knows when He is coming back to earth. Only God, the heavenly Father knows the time and day. But, while we are waiting God has a job for us to do. God wants us to tell others about Jesus.

One day Jesus was with His disciples sitting on the Mount of Olives. He reminded His disciples that a time would come when the world would come to an end and God would make a new heaven and a new earth. The disciples asked Jesus when these things would happen.

Jesus told them even He did not know the day or time but that certain things would happen that would be signs that the end of the present world was coming. First, Jesus said that many people would come and say to the world that they were the real Son of God. If you hear someone say this do not believe him or her. When Jesus returns to earth God will announce it and everyone living will know for sure it is the real Jesus returning.

Jesus also said there would be constant news about wars happening in many countries all around the world. This would be a sign that the time was getting close for His return. Then Jesus said

there would be major earthquakes and other natural disasters and great famines where people could not get enough food. These would also be signs that the end of the world was getting close.

Then people all over the world would also grow in their hate for Christians and many Christians would be killed for believing in Jesus as the only Son of God. We know that in many countries today many of the people in some countries hate Christians and do all sorts of things to get rid of them.

Jesus said many people who say they are Christians will turn away from believing in Jesus and following God and some will even go against those who once were their friends and still believe in Jesus. This would be another sign that the end of the world was getting close.

Jesus also said many people will become religious leaders and will tell people lies about God and will convince people to believe things that are not true and many people would stop being kind and loving. That is a reason why we must know what the Bible says so we know what is true and what is not true.

Then, Jesus said, when the Word of God, the story of Jesus, the things of God in the Bible are told and taught to the whole world, the end will come.

The Bible says if someone tells you that Jesus has come and He is in a religious building like a church somewhere in the world, or He is

out in a special place in the desert, do not believe it. Jesus will come like lightening and Jesus will appear in the sky in a way the entire world will see Him at the same time. The angels of heaven will announce Jesus' return with a loud trumpet.

Jesus finally said that no one, not even the angels of heaven know the time or date that Jesus will return – so every day we should all be ready. We should all be doing what God wants us to be doing and obeying Him because Jesus will return when people are not expecting Him to return. It will be a surprise, the most wonderful surprise that has ever happened.

### **Questions and discussion:**

- When Jesus left this earth He said one day He would come back. Who knows when Jesus is returning?
- Does a fortuneteller know when Jesus is coming back to earth?
- If someone tells you Jesus has returned and is in a church somewhere would that be true? If not, why not?
- Do the angels know when Jesus is coming back to earth?"
- While we are waiting for Jesus to come back to earth, what does God tell us we should do while we are waiting?