

God is our Saviour

(3 weeks)



Outcomes:

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- The events leading up to Easter
- The reason Jesus died on the cross
- That Jesus came alive again and is still alive today

Related topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Countries of the world: Australia and New Zealand

Link between “God is our Saviour” and the topics:

John 3:16 For God loved the world so much that He sent his only son so that whoever believes in Him should not die but have everlasting life.

God wants the people of every country in the whole world to come to know Him, so that they can live forever with Him in heaven. People of every nation can come to know the true God by asking Jesus to forgive their sins and then to follow Him. Some people have never heard about Jesus so those who know about Him must tell others.

Values:

Faith; respect for truth; cultural understanding; thankfulness

Easter Week 1: Jesus rides into Jerusalem

Bible references: Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19

Introduction

In a few weeks we will be celebrating Easter.

Why do we celebrate Easter?

Which are the special days in the Easter celebration? (Good Friday and Easter Sunday)

On the Sunday before Easter Sunday, many churches celebrate Palm Sunday. This is when we remember when Jesus rode into the city of Jerusalem on a donkey and all the people honoured him by cheering and waving palm branches. Here is the story from the Bible.

Bible Lesson: Jesus on a donkey

As they approached Jerusalem Jesus sent out two disciples. He said, "Go to the village ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a young donkey tied up. No one has ever ridden on this donkey before. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says anything to you, tell them that the Lord needs it."

The disciples went and did what Jesus told them to do. They found a young donkey tied at a doorway. They untied it. Some people asked, "What are you doing?" The disciples answered as Jesus had told them to do. So the people let them go.

The disciples brought the young donkey to Jesus. They threw their coats over it Jesus got on the donkey. Usually a donkey that had never been ridden before would want to throw a person off its back. But this one didn't. It stayed calm and let Jesus ride on its back.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem a very large crowd spread their coats on the road. Others cut down palm branches and put them on the road. Some waved palm branches and shouted praise to God.

"Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heaven."

The children shouted too. They were happy that Jesus was coming to their city. They didn't know that terrible things would happen to Him there. Jesus knew, but He kept riding on into Jerusalem anyway.

The children came into the temple shouting praise to Jesus and singing, and the leaders were angry at so much noise from the children. They told Jesus to tell the children to be quiet, but Jesus said, "No, the children are doing the right thing. He said if the children didn't praise Jesus, even the stones on the roadway would begin to sing and praise God!"

Discussion

How can children praise God today?

The children welcomed Jesus into the city. How can we welcome Jesus into our lives today? (He wants us to ask Him into our lives. His Holy Spirit can live in us and stay with us forever.)

Art/craft

Hosanna tube puppets

Puppets can be made from cardboard tubes as shown. A tube can be made by rolling and taping cardboard. Draw a face on the tube. Attach pieces of cotton wool for hair. Dress the tube with fabric or coloured wrapping paper. To make arms, push a long pipe cleaner through prepared holes, or just cut arms from paper and stick on. Place a small piece of fern in one hand to represent a palm branch.



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Easter Week 2: Eating together with his friends

Bible reference

John 12

Matthew 26; Mark 14

Introduction

Last week we heard how the people shouted praise to Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. The children especially were excited to see Jesus coming and joined in the celebration.

To show we love and appreciate someone we sometimes give them a gift. Can you think of times when we give gifts to people we love?

Today we are going to hear about a lady who wanted to show how much she loved Jesus by giving him something very expensive. Her name was Mary. (This Mary was not the mother of Jesus but a different Mary.)

Bible Lesson: Mary's gift

Mary had listened to Jesus whenever she could. She wanted to know more about God. She appreciated Jesus very much. She had heard Jesus say that he was going to die. She wanted to show him how much she appreciated him. She took a lot of money that she had saved carefully, and went and bought a jar of very expensive perfume. Mary took the expensive perfume and poured it on Jesus' feet, and then on his head. Then she wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the sweet smell of perfume.

Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, didn't like what Mary did. He loved money more than anything, and it would be his love of money that was going to cause him to betray Jesus. Judas said, "This perfume should have been sold and the money given to the poor!"

He didn't say this because he cared about the poor. He said it because he loved money and thought he would like to have that money for himself.

"Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "The perfume was meant for the day I die and am buried. You will always have poor people but you won't always have me."

The day came to celebrate the Passover Feast. This was the celebration of the time when the Israelites were set free from slavery in the land of Egypt. This feast took place at the same time every year.

Jesus sent out two of his disciples. He said to them, "Go into the city. A man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. He will show you a large upstairs room. Prepare for us to eat there."

The disciples went into the city. They found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover meal. When evening came, Jesus arrived with his disciples.

Jesus knew that Judas was going to do something bad to him. He was going to tell the soldiers where Jesus was so that they could capture him. Judas had agreed to do this for thirty silver coins. While they were eating Judas left to go and do what he had planned to do.

At this meal Jesus did something special for his disciples to help them always remember what he was going to do. He was going to die on the cross.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks and broke it. He handed it to his disciples and said, "Take it and eat it. This is my body."

Then he took the cup. He gave thanks and handed it to them. All of them drank from it. "This is my blood poured out for you to forgive the sins of many." Then they sang a hymn and went to the Mount of Olives to pray.

While they were praying Judas came up to Jesus and kissed him. This was the sign to the soldiers that this was Jesus. The soldiers arrested Jesus and took him away. Jesus had never done anything wrong, but he was sentenced to death. The leaders said that he had to die because he said he was the king of the Jews. He died on a cross alongside two thieves who had also been sentenced to death.

Jesus died to take the punishment for every wrong thing that anyone has ever done. He did this because all people have sinned, and cannot be a friend of God. But when we ask Jesus to forgive us he takes away our sin and we can be friends with God.

Questions

Why did Mary pour perfume on the feet of Jesus?

Why did Judas say that the perfume should have been sold and given to the poor?

What was the Passover celebration?

What did Jesus say about the bread and wine that he shared with the disciples at the Passover meal?

How did Judas betray Jesus?

Why did the leaders want Jesus to be killed?

Why did God allow his son Jesus to die?

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Easter Week 3: Jesus is alive and appears to his friends

Bible reference

Luke 24

John 20

Introduction

At Easter we remember the time when Jesus died on the cross for us, and that he came alive again three days later.

On which day do we remember when Jesus died?

On which day do we remember when Jesus came alive again?

Who sentenced Jesus to death?

Why did God the Father allow this to happen to his son?

On which day did Jesus come alive again?

Bible Lesson: Jesus is alive!

Not all the leaders hated Jesus. There was one leader, Joseph of Arimathea, who loved Jesus. He did not like what the rest of the leaders had done. He went to Pilate, the governor, to ask if he could have the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission for Joseph to take the body. Joseph took some fine linen cloth and soaked it in expensive perfume. He wrapped the linen cloth around Jesus' body. Joseph was a rich man. He owned a lovely garden just below the hill of Calvary where Jesus died. In the garden there was a cave cut into the rock. This was a tomb which he planned as a place to bury members of his family when they died. Joseph carried the body of Jesus to the tomb and carefully laid Jesus' body inside it. There was a huge round stone next to the tomb. Joseph rolled the stone in front of the cave to cover the opening. Then he went home.

The next was Saturday. The friends of Jesus were very sad. They did remember that Jesus had said, "In three days I shall rise again."

On Sunday morning at first light, some women who had been friends of Jesus wanted to go to the tomb to put more spices and perfume on the body. But how could they get into the tomb when the huge stone was in front of the entrance? God took care of that. Before the women arrived at the tomb there was a great earthquake. The earth shook and the stone rolled away. The angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He was bright and shining and he was dressed in clothing as white as the snow. Jesus was not in the tomb. The tomb was empty!

There were soldiers guarding at the tomb. They were filled with fear and ran back to the city. The women came to the tomb and saw that the body was not there. They saw two angels. "Do not be afraid," one of the angels said. Jesus is not here. He has risen." Go and tell his disciples that they will see him." Quickly the two ladies ran to tell the disciples.

On Sunday evening the disciples were together. They had locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders who had put Jesus to death. Suddenly Jesus came in and stood amongst them. He said, "May peace be with you!"

Then he showed them his wounds in his hands where the nails had been, and the wound in his side where the soldiers had cut him after he died. The disciples knew that it was Jesus. They remember now how he had said that after three days he would come alive again.

"Do you have anything to eat?" asked Jesus.

They gave him a piece of cooked fish. Jesus took it and ate it. They knew he was not a ghost!

After his death, Jesus appeared to his disciples over a period of 40 days. Then he was taken up to heaven. Jesus took the disciples to a mountain top where they watched him go up in a cloud. While he was going up they kept looking at the sky. Suddenly two men dressed in white clothing stood beside them. They said, "Why are you standing here looking at the sky?" Jesus has gone back to heaven. But he will come back one day in the same way you saw him go."

Discussion

Jesus had a new and different body that allowed him to pass through locked doors, and to appear and disappear whenever he chose. The Bible teaches that one day we too shall have different bodies that will allow us to do things we cannot now do.

Where will we be when we have this new type of body?

What will heaven be like?

Why did Jesus show the disciples his hands and side?

Jesus will always have the wounds he received on the cross and when we see him we will be reminded of how much it cost the Son of God to pay the price for all the wrong things we have done.

If Jesus has gone back to heaven, is he still with us here in the world today?

How can Jesus be with us today?

Can he still help us today as he helped people in the Bible?

Easter activity

Make a 3D model of the garden where Jesus was buried.

