

Year 6

God is our Saviour

3 Weeks



Outcomes:

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- The reason Jesus died on the cross
- That Jesus came alive again and is still alive today
- The gift of Salvation

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Countries of the world: Israel and the Middle East

Link between “God is our Saviour” and classroom 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. How did Fijians come to know about Jesus?

Values:

faith; respect for truth; thankfulness

Biography:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

God is our Saviour

Easter Week 1

Jesus was crucified

The events leading up to the Crucifixion

Revision questions

What was the meal that Jesus was celebrating with His disciples just before Easter? (Passover).

What did Jesus serve at the meal? (bread and wine)

What did the bread and wine represent? (His body and blood)

How did the disciples feel when they were told that Jesus was going to die?

Who betrayed Jesus on that night? (Judas)

What did he do?

Why did the leaders want to put Jesus to death? (Jesus was becoming too popular with the people – seen by the crowds who cheered for him on His entry into Jerusalem)

What did the leaders say was their excuse for putting Jesus to death? (They said that Jesus claimed to be the King of the Jews.)

The Crucifixion

Jesus walked out of Jerusalem carrying his cross. They had taken off the purple robe and dressed him in his own clothes. The cross was heavy. The Lord Jesus had suffered terribly from the beating and lack of sleep the night before so he walked slowly. A man called Simon was pulled from the crowd to carry the cross for the Lord Jesus while Jesus walked ahead. They moved toward a place called Golgotha, or Calvary. Two other prisoners carried their crosses. They were robbers.

Some soldiers walked in front of the crowd. One carried a sign that Pilate had written. It was to be hung at the top of Jesus' cross. "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," the sign said. The Jewish leaders did not like those words. They said, "Write, 'He said: I am the King of the Jews'." Pilate had refused to change the sign. "What I have written, I have written," he said.

When the crowd reached the hill where Jesus would be crucified, the soldiers offered him something to drink. It was some kind of wine mixed with a drug that would make it easier for him to bear the pain. The Lord Jesus would not drink it. He would take every bit of the suffering himself. The soldiers put nails through his hands and feet and hung him up on the cross to die.

It was nine o'clock in the morning. The two robbers were on either side of him. The soldiers threw a dice to see who would get his clothes. They were used to crucifixions and hearing screams and curses from those who were dying. But the man on the middle cross, Jesus, did not curse or scream. He called out, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." The Lord Jesus was praying for his enemies! What kind of man is this?" they wondered.

People came and stood watching, shaking their heads. "You!" they yelled. "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

The chief priests and the scribes joined in the mocking. "He saved others but he can't save himself. If he is the King of the Jews let him come down from the cross and we will believe him."

It was not the nails that held the Lord Jesus to the cross. He had power to come off that cross. It was his love for us that held him there. His blood was shed so that our sin could be forgiven. We were born with a sinful nature - a nature that chooses wrong - the lies, the selfishness, the hatred, the disobedience, the stealing and all the other sins we have ever done. These can be forgiven only through the blood of Christ.

It is easy to hate the sin of those who crucified and mocked the Lord Jesus. Could even their sins be forgiven? Yes! Their sin too could be forgiven (Acts 6:7).

One of the robbers joined in the mocking. He said, "Jesus, aren't you the Messiah? Then save yourself and us too!"

But the other robber said, "Aren't you afraid of God, even when you are dying? We are getting the punishment we deserve. We are guilty but this man has done nothing wrong. He is not guilty." He spoke to the Lord Jesus, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you shall be with me in Paradise."

It was now twelve o'clock. Three hours had gone by since the crucifixion began. Strange things were happening. Darkness came over all the land; not just cloudy darkness but night darkness. It lasted for three hours, until three o'clock in the afternoon.

It was about that time that the Lord Jesus cried with a loud voice, "My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?" God had to abandon him while Jesus took the punishment for our sin. 1 Peter 2:24 says, "He carried our sins in his own body on the cross". If we trust the Lord Jesus as our Savior, we will never have to be separated from God. He will never leave us alone in our life on earth or in our next life after we die when we will be with Him in Heaven.

Then Jesus cried with a loud voice, "It is finished!" All that he had come to do was finished. When something is finished there is nothing left to be done. No one can add anything else to pay for sin. The Lord Jesus did it all.

Jesus spoke one last time. "Father," he said. "Into your hands I give my spirit." The separation from God was over. Jesus' spirit left his body. Jesus was dead.

The leader of the group of soldiers that crucified him looked at Jesus on the cross. "Surely this man was the Son of God," he said. He must have thought, "I am guilty of crucifying one who was not guilty."

In the temple in the city a huge curtain called a veil hung in front of the altar. Once every year the high priest had gone behind the veil with the blood of animals to offer it as a sacrifice for the sins of the people. This was the only time anyone ever went behind that curtain. But, when the Lord Jesus died that veil was torn in half from the top to the bottom! The blood of animals was no longer necessary to come to God. All could come through the blood of the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God.

One of the rulers of the Jews went to Pilate. His name was Joseph, and the Bible says he did not vote to have Jesus put to death. It took a lot of courage for any Jew to go to Pilate at this time. "Please, may I take his body from the cross and bury it?" Joseph asked.

"Is he dead already?" Pilate questioned. It was not usual that anyone could die so soon from crucifixion! The soldiers checked. They broke the legs of the robbers so that they might die more quickly. But they did not break Jesus' legs because he was already dead. They pierced his side with a spear and they knew he was dead.

The soldiers gave Pilate the word. "Yes, Jesus is dead." Pilate gave Joseph permission to take the body.

Up until this time Joseph had not spoken of his love for the Lord Jesus because he was afraid of the Jews. Suddenly he was brave and he didn't care who knew. Nicodemus too had feared to speak of his love for the Lord Jesus. Together Joseph and Nicodemus removed the body from the cross. They wrapped it in linen with sweet-smelling spices, and buried the Saviour in a new tomb in Joseph's garden.

The leaders of the Jews were certain that this was the end. Well, almost certain, that is! They went back to Pilate again.

"We remember that this deceiver said he would rise from the dead in three days," they said. "His disciples might come to steal his body and then say he has risen. We want guards to watch the tomb for three days."

Pilate gave permission. The tomb was sealed and the guards were stationed to make sure the body of Christ would stay in the tomb and not be stolen.

Review questions

1. Why did the Lord Jesus die? *Ans. For the sins of the world.*
2. What kinds of people were at the cross? *Ans. Rulers who hated him, friends who loved him, soldiers and others who didn't care.*
3. What did they say to mock him while he hung on the cross? *Ans. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and we will believe. " He said he trusted in God so let God save Him now. "*
4. What held the Lord Jesus to the cross? *Ans. His love.*
5. What did Jesus ask God to do for his enemies? *Ans. He prayed, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."*
6. Name some of the strange things that happened when he died. *Ans. Darkness at midday; the temple curtain was torn in two.*

7. Why did Jesus cry “My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?” *Ans. He was separated from God because of our sin.*
8. Who took the body of the Lord Jesus off the cross and laid it in a tomb? *Ans. Joseph and Nicodemus.*

Easter workbook activity:

Missing words: worship, forgive, guilty, remember, where, risen.

God is our Saviour

Easter Week 2

Jesus is alive!

The Resurrection

Adapted from Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 23:56-24:12; 36-48; John 20:1-21.

The body of Jesus had been taken to the cave-tomb in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. The heavy tomb stone was sealed and guards stood on watch to make sure that the body was not stolen.

It seemed that guarding a dead man’s grave would be an easy job for the soldiers. Surely there was no work involved in that. They were just to see that the tomb was not disturbed. But they could not do it, for God himself was in charge of that grave. Those strong soldiers were absolutely powerless to keep the grave undisturbed. Their guarding time was up. An angel took over!

When the soldier saw the angel they were so afraid they became like dead men. When they were able to get away from the tomb they rushed back into the city to the Jewish leaders. The soldiers told what had happened.

“Don’t tell that to anyone,” the Jewish leaders warned. They brought out a large amount of money.

“We’ll give you this,” they said, “if you do not tell what you know. Say that you fell asleep and his disciples came and took his body away.” The promise of a lot of money made it very easy for them to lie.

When the Lord Jesus was buried, some women who were special friends Jesus wanted to put sweet-smelling spices on his body just as Nicodemus had done, but they came too late. All they could do was watch Joseph, Nicodemus and others roll the big stone to close the opening of the grave then go home.

The next day was the Sabbath, (the day of rest for the Jews), so they could not go to the tomb on that day. But early Sunday morning they were on their way. It was still dark when they left their homes. They were very sad.

“How can we get to the body?” one asked. “Who will roll the stone away from the door?” That was a big problem, but still they went on their way. When they came in sight of the tomb they saw it was open! Mary Magdalene hurried to look inside. She called out, “He’s gone! He’s not there! His body is gone!” She was so upset she didn’t wait to discuss it with the other women. Whatever happened? Would Peter and John know anything about it? She hurried back into the city to find them, calling out, “They have taken the Lord out of the grave and we don’t know where they laid him.” Peter and John immediately started for the grave and Mary Magdalene followed. Had she waited with the other women she would have learned something else. After she had gone they saw an angel. “Don’t be afraid,” the angel said to the women. “I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen. He said that would happen. Come and see the place where he was lying.”

The women came closer to the tomb and they saw that truly he was not there, although the cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus body were lying in the tomb.

The angel told the women, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” Then they remembered Jesus words; truly He had told them this would happen.

The angel said, “Go tell his disciples and Peter that He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” The women ran to spread the good news! It was such wonderful news that they were almost afraid to believe it!

Meantime Peter and John were running to the tomb. Mary Magdalene was coming more slowly behind them. John arrived first and stopped at the entrance to look in. Peter pushed by him into the tomb. John followed. There they saw the linen clothes in which Joseph and Nicodemus had wrapped the body of Jesus. They were exactly in the shape of the body but they were empty. The cloth that had been over his face was separate from the others. In some way the body had moved out of the linen wrappings without moving them! They returned to their home, their minds filled with wonder.

Mary Magdalene moved up to the opening and looked inside. She saw two angels!

“Woman, why are you crying?” they asked her.

“They’ve taken my Lord away, and I don’t know where they have laid him” she answered. As she turned around she saw someone behind her. “Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?” he asked her.

Mary thought it was the gardener. “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you laid him and I will take him away,” she said.

The man standing there said, “Mary!” Immediately Mary knew it was Jesus.

“My Master!” she cried.

Mary Magdalene was the first person to see the Lord Jesus after he had risen from the dead. “Go to my brothers, my followers, and tell them I am going to my Father,” the Lord Jesus told her.

Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples she had seen the risen Lord Jesus and what he said to her. The other women who had heard the message of the angel had also told their stories. The disciples did not believe the women, but they knew they were speaking the truth.

Jesus appears to His disciples

That evening the disciples were in a room behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jews. Suddenly Jesus was there! Locked doors couldn't keep him out! "Peace be to you!" He said.

At first they were terribly frightened. They thought they were seeing a spirit!

"Why are you troubled?" he asked them. "Look at my hands and my feet," and He showed them the wounds from the nails in his hands and feet. "It is me. Touch me and see. A spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

Now the disciples knew what the women said was true. They were glad and filled with joy. They were happier than they had ever been before!

"Do you have anything to eat?" He asked. They gave him a piece of boiled fish and watched while he ate it. "While I was still with you," He said, "I told you everything written about me in the Old Testament must come true." He helped them to understand how the Old Testament spoke about Him.

"This is what is written: the promised Saviour will suffer and rise from the dead the third day. Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached to all nations. You are witnesses of these things. As the Father sent me, so send I you."

Review Questions

1. What lie did the soldiers tell about what took place at the tomb? *Ans. They said they fell asleep and the disciples came and stole the body of Jesus out of the tomb.*
2. Why did they tell that lie? *Ans. Because the rulers of the Jews promised them a lot of money if they would say that.*
3. What did the women plan to do at Jesus' grave? *Ans. Put spices on his body.*
4. What did they find there? *Ans. The stone rolled away; some saw an angel.*
5. What did the angel tell them? *Ans. "He is not here: for he is risen." "Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead."*
6. Who was the first person to see the Lord Jesus after he had risen from the dead? *Ans. Mary Magdalene.*
7. What did Peter and John see when they went to the tomb? *Ans. The grave clothes lying in place with the body gone.*
8. Where did the Lord Jesus meet with the disciples? *Ans. He came into a room where the disciples were staying behind locked doors*
9. What did he do to prove that he was real? *Ans. Showed them the wounds in his hands and feet. Told them to touch him. Ate some fish.*

God is our Saviour

Easter Week 3

The gift of Salvation

Introduction

Over the past two weeks we have read about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus died to take the sins of the whole world. But He does not force Himself on anyone, so it is up to each individual to decide whether they want the free gift that Jesus is offering. Jesus is offering us a home in Heaven when we die, and a friendship throughout our lifetime.

Heaven is a Free Gift

The Bible tells us that it is not possible to get to Heaven by being 'good enough'. That's because God is perfect, and no one can ever be perfect like God. Our sin causes us to be separated from God.

Ephesians 2:8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. (NLT)

Everyone is a sinner

Romans 3:23 For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. (NLT)

The Cost of Sin

Because God is just He must punish all sin. However, He is also merciful, and does not want to punish us. So He made a way for us. (NLT)

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. (NLT)

Jesus is the Answer

Jesus is God's answer to our sin. Jesus died on the cross for us, and through His death bought us a place in Heaven. This is called 'Salvation'. Jesus did not deserve punishment because He had no sin. But He took our punishment, to keep us from getting what we do deserve - eternal death and separation from God.

John 14:6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. (NLT)

Trust in Christ Alone

Faith is the key to receiving the gift of Salvation. Out of faith we are able to trust in Christ alone, confess His Holy name before others, say sorry for our sins, and finally in obedience to His Word, be baptized.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV)

1 John 1:12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. (NLT)

Baptism

John the Baptist was called by God to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus. He was the cousin of Jesus and born just six months before Jesus was.

John left home and went to live a rough, outdoor life in the hot, bare desert near the River Jordan. He wanted to be alone and find out God's purpose for him. He was a plain, outspoken man, like the prophet Elijah, and he dressed like him too. He wore a rough camel-skin coat, tied round his waist with a leather belt. He ate the desert food of wild honey and locusts, (grasshoppers).

God gave him a message to preach and crowds soon came flocking out to hear John preaching. 'Listen!' John thundered. "God's kingdom is on its way! See that you are ready for it. Put your lives right with God."

"Why should we do that?' the people asked. 'We are God's chosen people. He must be pleased with us."

"Don't rely on that!" John warned them. 'Being born a Jew isn't good enough. You must tell God how sorry you are for doing evil and begin to live lives that please him."

Many people knew that it was God's voice speaking to them. They were really sorry for breaking God's laws and wanted to please God. 'So John baptized them in the River Jordan by dipping them under the water. It was a sign to show everyone that God had forgiven them and given them a clean, new start.

"Now change your ways, John urged. "Don't be greedy and grasping. If you have more food and clothes than you need, share with others. Do your jobs well and without grumbling. That is what God wants."

John warned the people that God would punish them if they did not repent and change their ways, but he also brought them good news.

"I'm preparing the way for a very important person, who is coming soon," he announced. "He is so much greater than I am that I'm not good enough to be his meanest slave. I'm only baptizing you with water. He will bring you all God's blessing and power. He will be God's awaited King.

One day, Jesus came to see John. "Please baptize me, too," Jesus asked him.

'I couldn't do that!' John exclaimed. He had known Jesus from childhood.

"You have never gone your own way and disobeyed God. You have nothing to be sorry for. You are a better person than I am."

"But this is what God wants," said Jesus.

So John baptized him.

As Jesus came up from the water, a strange thing happened. When John tried to describe it afterwards, he said: "I saw something that looked like a dove come and rest on Jesus."

Then, in a sudden blinding flash, John realized that the relative he had known and admired for so long, was none other than the King he had been preaching about. Immediately he heard

God's voice speaking to Jesus: "You are my own dear Son," God said. "I am very pleased with you."

Jesus came to John to be baptised, not because he had done anything wrong, but to show us that this was one of the things He wants us to do. He wants us to come to God.

Baptism today

Being baptized is a sign that we have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. In many churches Christians are baptized just the way Jesus was, by going under the water.

In some churches such as the Methodist Church, there is a ceremony for babies called baptism. The parents bring the babies to the church for a blessing and water is poured on the baby's head. The baby is too young to ask for forgiveness for sin, so this is not the reason for the ceremony. The reason is that the parents are saying they want that baby to belong to Jesus. Parents bring their babies to be baptized because they want God to receive their children and their children to be part of the church. However, the second step is one the children must take as they grow up and to invite the Lord Jesus to be their Saviour, and live the way Jesus wants them too.

Older children can decide to be *confirmed*. This is a special service for those who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour and have decided that they want to live as Christians for the rest of their lives. They need to know:

- That God loves them
- That Jesus died for them to forgive their sins
- That they have received Jesus as their Saviour and Lord
- That the Bible is God's word to the people of the world, and we should read a portion of it each day
- That prayer is an important part of our lives, showing our dependence on God and our love for God
- That attending or Sunday School and church, and later the youth fellowship are important to help our faith and relationship with God to grow
- That when we earn money we should give some of it to the church as an act of worship and to help God's work
- That they should be able to share their faith with other people by doing kind deeds and by telling others that Jesus died to be their Saviour