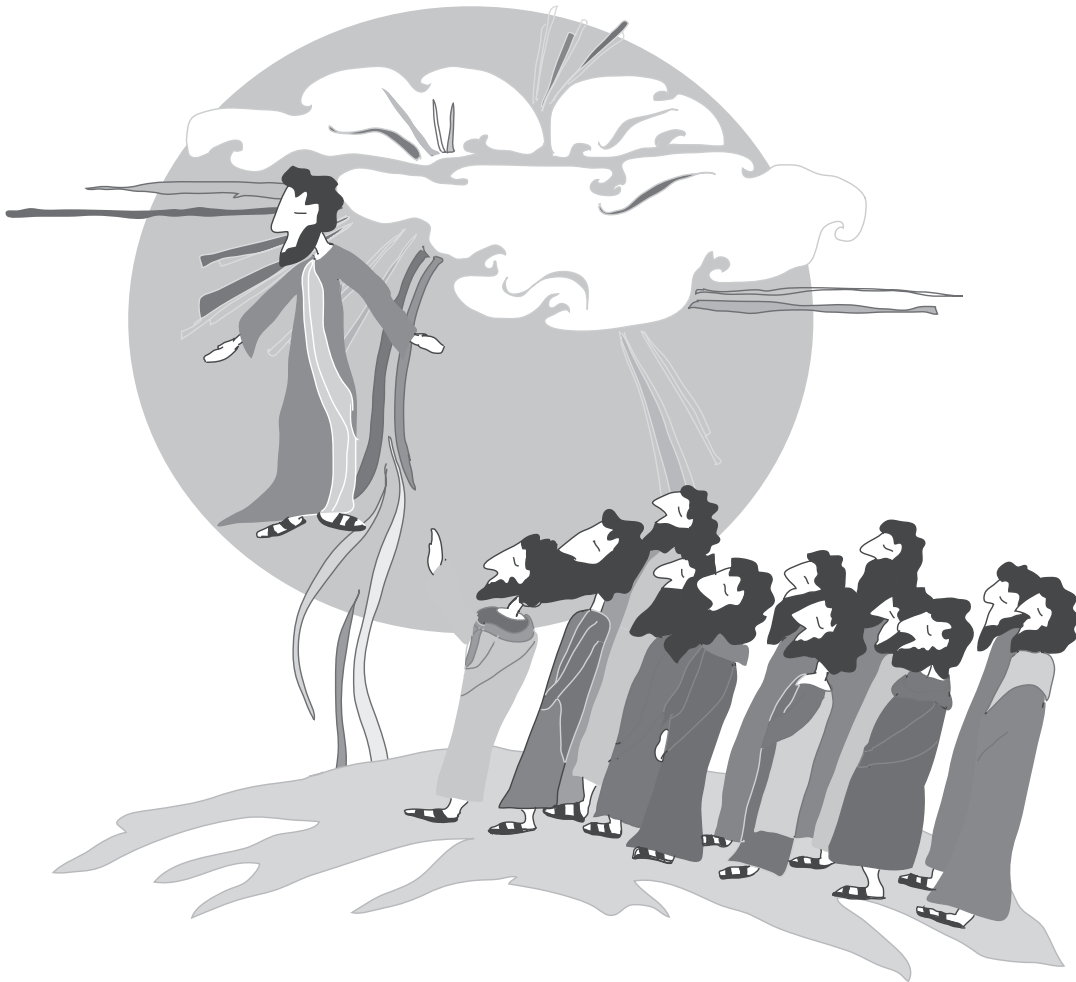


LESSON 43

The Ascension

LUKE 24:36-53



BIBLE TRUTH

JESUS LEFT THE EARTH, BUT HE WILL COME AGAIN

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 121)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) . . . 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 43—one for each child; markers or crayons

Solve the Puzzle

SUPPLIES: a small wire puzzle (The object of these puzzles is to get the two wire pieces apart. You can also use a simple combination lock where you spin the numbers. Simply change the challenge to getting the lock open. Once the children know the combination they can easily open the lock.)

What Is a Witness?

SUPPLIES: a jelly bean or other small candy to hide

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn about Jesus' departure back to heaven.

Use the following questions to guide the opening discussion:

- Have you ever been away from home for a long time? Maybe on a trip or a vacation?
- What are some of the things that excite you about arriving home?
(*sleeping in my own bed, sitting on my own couch, riding my own bike, etc.*)
- Where was Jesus before he came to earth to be born as a man?
(*He was in heaven with his Father.*)

After his time here on earth, Jesus returned home to heaven to be with his Father. That is where Jesus belongs, just as we belong in our own homes.

Take time to pray and thank God for becoming a man to save us from our sin. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 121, "The Ascension," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- What was the reaction of the disciples when they saw Jesus?
(*They were frightened and still didn't believe that it was he—they thought he was a spirit or ghost.*)
- What did Jesus do to help them believe he was real and not a ghost?
(*Jesus invited them to see his nail-scarred hands and to touch him. Then, to prove he was real, he ate a piece of fish.*)

- What did Jesus teach the disciples?

(After eating breakfast, Jesus taught the disciples the meaning of the gospel—that he had suffered and died and risen again so that repentance and forgiveness of sins could be proclaimed.)

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Why do you think the disciples were afraid when they saw Jesus?

(Once dead, people do not return to life. The disciples didn't understand when Jesus told them he would rise again, so they were startled.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

If there were any lingering doubts that Jesus was God, they were silenced at his ascension. During the forty days before the ascension, Jesus had appeared on a number of occasions to the disciples. Each time he was met with doubters (Matthew 28:17). This time, doubt and fear are not mentioned. What a tender moment it was as the Lord said goodbye. For three years these men had lived with the Lord. They had learned much and were arguably the most privileged men on earth. They not only saw the Lord, but they also walked with him, laughed with him, were afraid with him and for him, watched him die, and then saw him rise again.

Jesus blessed them and was taken up into heaven. Their last act was to worship the man they had come to believe was God. From there, they went to the temple, where they praised God continually. Likely the curtain, torn in two at the death of Christ, was sewn together again. These men, however, now understood the gospel. Never again would another sacrifice for sin be needed. Jesus, the Lamb of God, had been slain—for them and for us.

■ Why do you think God included these stories in the Bible?

(God included these stories to help us believe that Jesus really did rise from the dead. If Jesus had been simply a man, he would not have been able to rise from the dead. As it is, he is not just a man, but the Son of God.)

■ What helped the disciples believe?

(Jesus opened their minds. Even today there are people who hear all about Jesus but still refuse to believe because they see no connection to themselves. Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, still needs to open the minds of people today so they can believe.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 43—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

■ What is happening in the picture?

(Jesus is going up into the clouds, looking down at the disciples.)

■ What do you think it would have been like to see Jesus float up into the sky?

(Accept any answer.)

■ Where did Jesus go when he was lifted up?

(Jesus went back to his Father in heaven.)

■ What do we learn about Jesus from this passage?

(No mere man can simply lift himself up into the heavens. Jesus was all-powerful God who surely defeated death in rising from the dead. He is more than a mere man.)

Solve the Puzzle

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a small wire puzzle (The object of these puzzles is to get the two wire pieces apart. You can also use a simple combination lock where you spin the numbers. Simply change the challenge to getting the lock open. Once the children know the combination they can easily open the lock.)

Ask the class if anyone has seen a puzzle like the one you have. Pass it around and have the kids try to take it apart. Once they have tried it for a while, have them pass it along to another student. After a while, show them how to do it. Usually the puzzles are quite easy to take apart if you know how.

Read Luke 24:44–47. Explain to the children that the disciples did not understand the gospel, even though Jesus had risen and was with them in plain view. But, as soon as Jesus opened their minds to the Scriptures, they understood. Jesus is the solution to the puzzle of sin. By his death we can be forgiven of our sin and live forever with him in heaven.

Compare the puzzle to the Holy Spirit helping us believe in Jesus. Jesus is the answer to our puzzle. How can we be forgiven for our sins? Once God opens our eyes to the answer, it seems obvious.

What Is a Witness?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a jelly bean or other small candy to hide

Before class hide the jelly bean somewhere in the classroom. Hide it in a really hard-to-find location so that no one could possibly find it without the help of the witness.

Pick a witness (it might be best to make the witness one of your helpers) and secretly show her where the jelly bean is hiding.

Explain to the class that a witness is someone who sees something with their own eyes. A witness can then report what they saw and thus prove that something really happened.

Tell the children that you have hidden a jelly bean somewhere in the classroom and their job is to find it. Set the kids to looking, but do not give them any clues as to its location. After a while, they will begin to ask for help. Some may not even believe you really hid a jelly bean. Explain to the class that there is someone besides you who knows where the jelly bean is hidden. A witness has seen the hidden jelly bean with her own eyes. Since she knows where it is hidden she can show you how to find it. Tell the class they can ask yes or no questions of the witness in order to find the jelly bean.

Guided by the witness they will be able to find the jelly bean. Take time to help the children understand how important a witness is to help a person to find something that is well-hidden.

Read Luke 24:48. Ask them how the disciples were witnesses of Jesus and what that meant they would be doing? How can we be witnesses for Jesus?

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

LESSON 43 -THE ASCENSION

