

Jesus' Trial and Crucifixion

(Mark 14; Luke 22, 23; John 18, 19)

Pre-Session Warm Up

When was the last time you were punished for doing something wrong? [Teacher, let the children discuss.] Perhaps you were punished because you failed to clean your room. Maybe you were punished because you got into a fight or because you were talking when you were supposed to be listening at school? Often, we are punished because we do wrong things.

Have you ever been punished for something you did not do?
[Teacher, let the children discuss.]

The Bible tells us of One who was severely punished although He had done nothing wrong. He had gathered with His closest friends in a quiet garden when suddenly the silence of the night was broken by the sound of approaching soldiers.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, as we learn about Your trial and crucifixion this morning I pray we will understand more fully how awful our sin is and what a terrible, cruel, and horrible death You suffered for our sakes. Cause us to come to a deeper appreciation of all that You did for us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

or

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5)

Lesson

Review....

[Teacher, as you review, you can display various objects to help trigger the children's memories. For example, show a small plastic donkey and a small piece of palm branch when you talk about Palm Sunday. Or, a small piece of bread as you discuss the Last Supper.]

For the past few Sunday's we have been learning about the last week of Jesus' life. One week before His death, Jesus came riding into town on a donkey. He and His disciples had come to town to celebrate Passover. As He rode in, many people thought he was riding in like a king, so they waved palm branches at Him and laid down their clothes for His donkey to walk over and they shouted, "*Hosanna in the highest!*" which means, "*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!*"

Later that week Jesus and His disciples had the Passover meal together. During dinner the devil spoke to Judas' heart and told him that this was the night to carry out his plan to betray Jesus. But before Judas did that evil deed, Jesus asked His disciples to eat broken bread and drink wine in remembrance of Him. After supper Jesus washed the Disciples' feet to teach them that God wants us to serve others with a humble heart.

After supper, Judas left to tell the priests where Jesus was. Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn and then went out to a garden on the Mount of Olives. Then Judas, accompanied by a crowd of Roman soldiers carrying swords and clubs, found Jesus with His disciples and betrayed Him with a kiss.

As Jesus willingly submitted to the soldiers, Peter impetuously cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, but Jesus restored it, commanding Peter to put away his sword.

Today's Lesson...

[Teacher, we will be reading verses from Mark, Luke, and John. Put book marks into the children's Bibles before class to help them locate the various passages more quickly.]

The soldiers bound Jesus and brought Him to the Jewish high priest's house for questioning and trial.

John 18:12-13

So the soldiers, their commanding officer, and the Temple guards arrested Jesus and tied him up. (13) First they took him to Annas, since he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest at that time.

The Jewish religious leaders were in a hurry — they wanted to complete the trial and execution before sun up when the Sabbath began and the Passover celebration officially started. So, they took Jesus off to a trial in the home of the High Priest in the middle of the night.

Mark 14:53

They took Jesus to the high priest's home where the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law had gathered.

Mark 14:55

Inside, the leading priests and the entire high council were trying to find evidence against Jesus, so they could put him to death. But they couldn't find any.

The religious leaders knew they had no grounds for charging Jesus, so they tried to build evidence against him by using false witnesses. After false witnesses testified against Jesus, they blindfolded, beat, and spit on Him.

Luke 22:63-65

The guards in charge of Jesus began mocking and beating him. (64) They blindfolded him and said, "Prophesy to us! Who hit you that time?" (65) And they hurled all sorts of terrible insults at him.

They were making fun of Jesus.

John 18:19-24

Inside, the high priest began asking Jesus about his followers and what he had been teaching them. (20) Jesus replied, "Everyone knows what I teach. I have preached regularly in the synagogues and the Temple, where the people gather. I have not spoken in secret. (21) Why are you asking me this question? Ask those who heard me. They know what I said." (22) Then one of the Temple guards standing nearby slapped Jesus across the face. "Is that the way to answer the high priest?" he demanded. (23) Jesus replied, "If I said anything wrong, you must prove it. But if I'm speaking the truth, why are you beating me?" (24) Then Annas bound Jesus and sent him to Caiaphas, the high priest.

Why would Jesus allow men to accuse Him of lying and treat Him so cruelly? He did it because of His love for you and me. He wants you and me to be with Him in heaven someday. But because God is holy, no sin can be where He is. So God made a plan for our sin to be taken away. Jesus' suffering and cruel treatment was part of this plan which He willingly allowed because of His love for you (Luke 24:46).

The soldiers then brought Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea (the region where Jerusalem is located). [Teacher, show the children a map of Israel.]

John 18:29-31

So Pilate, the governor, went out to them and asked, "What is your charge against this man?" (30) "We wouldn't have handed him over to you if he weren't a criminal!" they retorted. (31) "Then take him away and judge him by your own law," Pilate told them. "Only the Romans are permitted to execute someone," the Jewish leaders replied.

Governor Pilate didn't want to handle this case, so he sent Him to Herod, the Roman ruler of the Galilee region, who happened to be in Jerusalem for Passover.

Luke 23:6-11

"Oh, is he a Galilean?" Pilate asked. (7) When they said that he was, Pilate sent him to Herod Antipas, because Galilee was under Herod's jurisdiction, and Herod happened to be in Jerusalem at the time. (8)

Herod was delighted at the opportunity to see Jesus, because he had heard about him and had been hoping for a long time to see him perform a miracle. (9) He asked Jesus question after question, but Jesus refused to answer. (10) Meanwhile, the leading priests and the teachers of religious law stood there shouting their accusations. (11) Then Herod and his soldiers began mocking and ridiculing Jesus. Finally, they put a royal robe on him and sent him back to Pilate.

Pilate found no fault in Jesus. Pilate knew that Jesus had lived and worked up in Galilee so he tried to pass Jesus off on Herod, the governor of Galilee. But Herod was not much help and he sent Jesus back to Pilate.

Luke 23:13-16

Then Pilate called together the leading priests and other religious leaders, along with the people, (14) and he announced his verdict. "You brought this man to me, accusing him of leading a revolt. I have examined him thoroughly on this point in your presence and find him innocent. (15) Herod came to the same conclusion and sent him back to us. Nothing this man has done calls for the death penalty. (16) So I will have him flogged, and then I will release him."

The people demanded that Jesus be crucified.

Luke 23:21-25

But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" (22) For the third time he demanded, "Why? What crime has he committed? I have found no reason to sentence him to death. So I will have him flogged, and then I will release him." (23) But the mob shouted louder and louder, demanding that Jesus be crucified, and their voices prevailed. (24) So Pilate sentenced Jesus to die as they demanded. (25) As they had requested, he released Barabbas, the man in prison for insurrection and murder. But he turned Jesus over to them to do as they wished.

Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the crowd loudly demanded his death; so Pilate sentenced Jesus to die. Pilate was afraid the crowd would cause a riot and he didn't want to lose his job. So, he didn't stand up for what he knew was right.

Sometimes it's hard to stand up for what you know is right. Have you ever been in a situation when your friends wanted you to do something you knew is not pleasing to the Lord? [Teacher, let the children respond.] Had Pilate been a man of real courage, he would have released Jesus no matter what the crowds said. But the crowd roared.

Even though Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent, to satisfy the Jews, Pilate had Jesus whipped and a purple robe placed on His shoulders and a crown of thorns on His head, but still the Jews demanded His death.

John 19:1-3

Then Pilate had Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip. (2) The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they put a purple robe on him. (3) "Hail! King of the Jews!" they mocked, as they slapped him across the face.

The whipping was done using strips of leather embedded with pieces of metal and bone. The whipping alone could have killed Him. The purple robe, suggesting royalty, and the crown of thorns were used to mock Christ's declaration of kingship.

How sad that the people didn't know who they were condemning to death. Jesus was God, the Son. He had no sin — His thoughts, words, and actions always pleased God, the Father. How unlike you and me. We are born wanting our own sinful way (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

Think of times when you have not pleased God. Perhaps you have wished something bad would happen to someone who hurt you. Maybe you have lied to your teacher at school. Perhaps you have selfishly refused to share something with your brother or sister. The Bible says that our sin deserves punishment — separation from God forever (Romans 6:23). But because Jesus was perfect, He suffered for our sin so that we would not have to. You can trust in Jesus to save you from sin's punishment. Being God's perfect Son, Jesus had no hatred for the crowd even as they cried out for His death. If only they would have realized who He really was.

Jesus was crucified along with two criminals.

John 19:17-19

Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). (18) There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. (19) And Pilate posted a sign on the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

As Jesus looked down from the cross upon the soldiers who had crucified Him, He asked God to forgive them.

Luke 23:34

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.

Although the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross and mocked Him as the blood flowed from His hands and feet, Jesus still loved the soldiers and had compassion on them. Because Jesus was dying for their sins, He could ask God to forgive them.

Christ's payment for sin applies to our lives as well. The Bible says that we have "*redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins*" (Colossians 1:14). Jesus had promised that His suffering on the cross and resurrection from the dead would pay for all sin. You can trust in Jesus to save you from sin's punishment. As He suffered and died, Jesus still had compassion on the soldiers who mocked Him.

Jesus cried out, "*It is finished!*" and died on the cross, taking the punishment for all sin forever.

John 19:30

When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Jesus has promised to forgive your sin and give you eternal life if you will believe in Him.

John 5:24

"I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.

To believe in Jesus means to admit to God that you are a sinner, and to trust in Jesus to save you from sin's punishment.

Have you ever told God that you want forgiveness of your sins and eternal life? If not, you can do so right now.

Closing Prayer

Father, I am a sinner, deserving of eternal punishment and separation from You. But thank You that you made a way for me to come to heaven when I die. Thank You, Jesus, for what You did for me on the cross. What suffering was Yours to have all the evil in the world put on You — You, who knew no sin! Thank You, that Your forgiveness is available for all. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

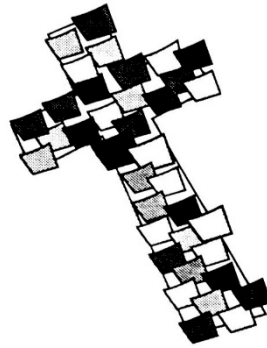
Learning Activities

Lesson Review Activity

You can review the story by placing the following items into a bag. As you take out each object, explain the story, or ask the children to tell you what the object means:

- Bread — last supper
- Coin — Judas betrayed Jesus for money
- Rope — Jesus' hands were tied
- Purple cloth — Jesus was mocked in a purple robe
- Thorns — Jesus wore a crown of thorns

- Cross — Jesus died on a cross
- Nails — nails pierced his hands and feet
- Sponge — they gave him vinegar on a sponge
- Spear (wooden skewer/toothpick) — they pierced his side
- White cloth — His burial linen
- Stone — the stone that sealed Jesus' tomb



Craft Corner

Mosaic Cross

Using a paint brush, have the children “glue” multi-colored tissue-paper squares on a construction paper cross with starch.

Game Center

Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. Where was Jesus when the soldiers came and arrested him? (Garden of Gethsemane)
2. Who betrayed Jesus with a kiss? (Judas)
3. When Jesus was arrested, did He try to get away? (No)
4. When Jesus was arrested, who ran away? (All the disciples)
5. Who denied he knew Jesus three times? (Peter)
6. What did they do to Jesus to make fun of him? (They blindfolded, beat, spit on Him, put a purple robe on Him.)
7. Why would Jesus allow men to accuse Him of lying and treat Him so cruelly? (Because He loves us so much!)
8. What was the name of the governor that found no fault in Jesus? (Pilate)
9. Did Jesus defend Himself before Pilate? (No.)
10. What did the crowd do when Pilate wanted to release Jesus? (They demanded Jesus be put to death.)
11. What prisoner was released instead of Jesus? (Barabbas)
12. Why did Pilate sentence Jesus to die if he thought that He was innocent? (He was more concerned about his own reputation.)
13. What did the soldiers put on Jesus' head? (Crown of thorns)
14. What did they whip Jesus with? (A strap of leather embedded with pieces of metal and bone.)
15. Who helped carry Jesus' cross? (Simeon)
16. Where was Jesus crucified? (Golgotha, Place of the Skull)
17. Who was crucified with Jesus? (Two robbers.)
18. What did Jesus cry out from the cross right before He died? (“*It is finished!*”)
19. What does it mean to “*believe in Jesus*”? (That you trust in what Jesus did for you on the cross.)
20. Have you ever been punished for something you did not do?

