

ESL Workbook
(Teacher's Guide)

Jesus: Who is this Man?
The Gospel of Mark

October 2019

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Advice to Teachers/Facilitators

How to Prepare For Class:

Make sure to spend time praying before beginning your preparations. Pray for wisdom in how to conduct the class, sensitivity towards the students, grace and favour. Pray that the students would learn about God.

Read over the materials a day or two before the lesson. Give yourself plenty of time to think about the content. Ask God to reveal truth to you.

Work through all the questions and answers. Select the questions you feel led to use. If you can't answer it, either research it (be careful to use reliable sources) or don't ask it. The answer guide is provided to help you.

Write up a brief lesson plan, including how many minutes each section might take. This will help you move the lesson along.

How to Use Materials

The Student Workbook

The materials are essentially in six parts: the background, the pre-reading question (s), the scripture passage, the What do you Think? discussion, the English exercise questions, and the discussion questions.

The illustrations used in lesson questions are designed to show the key events in the story. These can be used as a post reading exercise, where the students can summarize the story in their own words.

Each chapter begins with useful background information about the text: i.e. purpose, author, place in history, etc. This is followed by one or two questions in Before You Read. These are meant to get students thinking about the topic and help them access their prior knowledge.

The 'What Do You Think' reaction questions were developed by OMF for their method of telling the gospel through Bible stories. They are meant to encourage student interaction with God's Word and get them thinking. ***There are no wrong answers to these questions.*** However, if someone seems way off base, you might ask how they got that answer, or ask for other ideas from the class. There likely won't be time for every student to answer every question, but hopefully you will get some responses.

The exercise questions (True/False, Matching, Circle the Answer, Fill in the Blanks, etc.) are designed to help the students comprehend the story through repetition of key ideas and familiarity with the vocabulary. It has been shown that ESL students learn best when they have these kinds of exercise questions to do. The exercise questions are most useful for the Easier or Intermediate levels.

The discussion questions are divided into three sections: Easier, Intermediate, and Challenging. These levels are decided by the amount of fluency in English the student may have. The Easier questions are more fact based and the Challenging questions are more opinion/discussion in their orientation. The Intermediate questions are a mixture of both. Feel free to mix and match to suit your group.

The Teacher's Guide Answer Key

The answer keys to the questions are guidelines only. Be careful to give scriptural answers not just your own ideas or things you have been taught. Let Scripture explain Scripture. Sometimes you might have to explain the culture of the times. We have added notes to help, but for some things you might need more research. In that case ask the assistance of your pastor or use a well-known and accepted authority such as Matthew Henry's commentary.

How to Manage the Class

Organizing Groups

Allow students to join the group they feel most comfortable in. Sometimes a student will choose an easier group. If someone answers all the questions and seems to understand everything, suggest they join a more challenging group or ask them to be your assistant in translating or explaining. If a student is very quiet or looks totally lost suggest an easier group. Don't refer to it as a "lower" group.

Leading a Group

Make sure everyone knows your name and you know the name of all the students. (Name tags help). Be sure to welcome newcomers to the group. Take a few minutes to greet everyone and ask them how their week is going. Open the lesson with a prayer. Ask God for guidance and wisdom and that the students will understand.

Participation Issues

Allow the students to speak as much as possible. Guide them gently if they are mistaken. Never make anyone feel embarrassed for giving the wrong answer. Acknowledge the part of the answer is correct or say something like: "Yeah, a lot of people would agree with you but actually...".

It's a good idea to have everyone participate even just a little. This can be achieved by having everyone read a section of the story out loud. When people are reading, and mispronounce a word, correct them but don't over-correct. Don't correct more than three times. If they mispronounce a Bible name, tell them the usual way we say that name but remind them that these names are not English.

Don't force someone to answer a question. If no one volunteers to answer, don't answer them yourself. For factual questions ask the students to look at the story to see if they can find the answer there. For opinions, remind them that their opinions should be supported by facts from the story.

First time visitors

If there are new people joining the group allow them to listen and join in when they feel comfortable. Ask simpler questions of the newcomers to build their confidence in speaking out. Never put a visitor on the spot.

Managing the outspoken

Some people are very enthusiastic and love to jump in right away with their answers; others may love attention or are very competitive. Whatever the motivation, it can be very destructive to the learning to have one person dominating the discussion. Make sure you control how much any one person contributes- make sure everyone has a chance to speak. Be kind and polite but redirect the question to another person. For example: "That's a great thought, Sam! Let's hear what Peter thinks about that."

Also, sometimes there are volunteers or helpers assisting the group. Be sure to discuss prior to class what their role should be - assisting, not answering the questions or discussing side issues.

Managing the too quiet

Some people think it's rude to be too forward or are shy by nature. Encourage these people to speak. Ask them easy questions at first and follow it by a "what- do- you- think- about- that" sort of question.

Managing a larger group

In a larger group, some people don't get heard so it is valuable to break into smaller groups for discussions. This works better at the Intermediate or Advanced Levels. For Beginner Levels this can be done if there is an assistant to lead a smaller group.

Concluding and Following Up

It is very important to conclude the class on a positive note. If people have fun and enjoy being with each other, they will learn a lot and they will want to come back.

Make sure to refer to the lesson completed this week in the next class and ask the students whether it was helpful to them and what did they learn.

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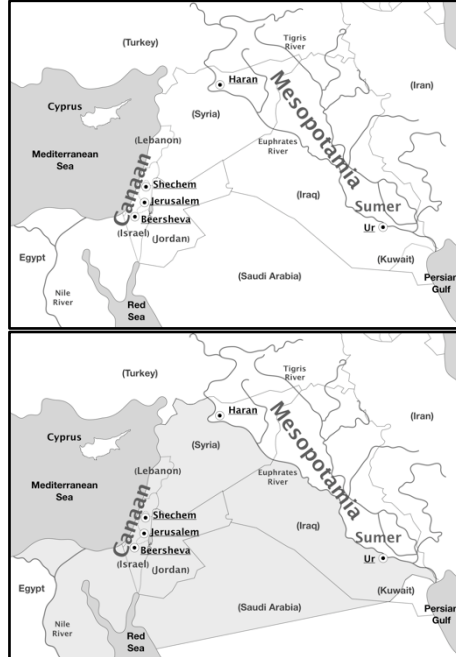
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History of Israel: Old Testament Period

~ 2100 BC God called **Abraham** to move from Ur, a prosperous and highly civilized city state located in Sumer, to the nomadic and semi-nomadic region of Canaan. Here the land was rocky and dependant on rainfall for its water supply.

But here God gave Abraham a promise of land.

This promise of the land was passed on to Abraham's son **Isaac**, and then to Isaac's unfavoured son, **Jacob**. But God chose Jacob, gave him 12 sons, and changed his name to **Israel**. The descendants of Jacob became known as the twelve tribes of Israel.



The Promised Land

~1900 BC Ten of Jacob's sons sold **Joseph**, Jacob's favourite son, to a travelling caravan bound for Egypt - to be sold as a slave. But a famine brought Joseph to the position of Pharaoh's right-hand man; a position from which he rescued his father, eleven brothers and their families. The brothers were changed by this. God promised that the sceptre would belong to Joseph's brother, **Judah** (Genesis 49:10). They stayed in Egypt for about 400 years. By the end of that time, Egypt had made the Israelites into slaves.

~1446 BC **Moses** led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and back to Canaan. There the twelve tribes established a confederation ruled by judges, priests, and prophets.



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~1043

Israel's first king was **Saul**, followed by **David** and **Solomon**. The tribes merged into the kingdom of Israel, which lasted more than 100 years. God told David that his throne would be established forever (2 Sam 7:12-16). Luke 1:31-33 says that God gave Jesus the throne of his father David, and of his kingdom, there would be no end. Solomon built the Temple.



~931 BC

In the time of Solomon's son, king **Rehoboam**, Israel split apart in a civil war. Ten northern tribes set up their own king (**Jeroboam I**) their own capital city (Samaria), and a couple of golden calves to worship. But they kept the name Israel for their kingdom. The two remaining southern tribes, Judah and Benjamin, kept the Davidic king (Rehoboam), the original capital city (Jerusalem), and took the name Judah.

All 19 kings of the northern kingdom of Israel, were wicked. The **Assyrians** conquered them and sent the people into exile throughout the Assyrian empire. Never heard of again, those Israelites became known as the "10 lost tribes". Assyria repopulated what had been the northern kingdom with Gentiles from throughout their territory. The territory was renamed as **Samaria**. The forced Gentile settlers intermarried with the remaining Israelites in the land. Their descendants became known as the Samaritans.



~722 BC



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~598 BC Of the 20 kings of the southern kingdom of Judah, 12 were wicked and 8 were good. The **Babylonians** - the next superpower of the region - conquered the Judahites, took them into exile in Babylon, but kept them together there. They destroyed Jerusalem and tore down Solomon's Temple.



~539 BC The Medo-Persian Empire conquered the Babylonian Empire. The Persian king, Cyrus the Great allowed all exiled peoples to return to their native lands and rebuild. The Babylonian kings helped the Jews return and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. But only 50,000 chose to do this. And although the Persians allowed local autonomy, Judah and all other regions would still be under Persian rule.



History of Israel: Intertestamental Period

336 BC Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire. His Macedonian (Greek) Empire continued to allow local autonomy to Judah, but Judah was still under Macedonian rule. When Alexander died, his empire was divided among his top generals. Each general set up a dynasty of rulers. The Seleucids ruled in Syria, north of Judea (Judah), and the Ptolemies ruled in Egypt, south of Judea.

~175-164 BC

The Seleucids and the Ptolemies warred with each other for territory, and Judea changed hands several times. The Seleucids finally won.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes was the 8th Seleucid king. He robbed the Temple, put a statue of Zeus in the Temple, and sacrificed a pig on the Temple altar. He banned all



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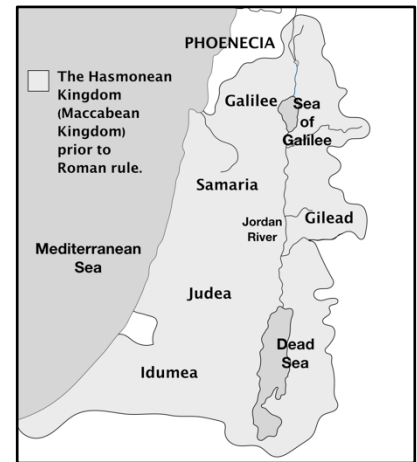
observances of Judaism. He replaced the high priest of the Temple with a man of his own choosing who would follow Hellenized (Greek) ways.



~167 BC Mattathias, a priest of the Hasmonean family led a Jewish insurgency against Seleucid rule. His son, **Judas Maccabeus** led the insurgents to reclaim Jerusalem and the Temple. But to keep the Seleucids at bay, Judas made an alliance with Rome.

The **Hasmoneans** set up a dynasty of kings and reclaimed most of the land that had once been that of King David.

In the time of the Babylonian exile, the Arabs had conquered Edom, the nation descended from Jacob's brother, Esau. The Edomites were able to move into the southern portions of the then vacant Judah and establish themselves there. When the Jews returned from Babylon, they were too weak to force the Edomites out. But the Hasmonean kings had regained strength.



The Hasmoneans gave the Edomites the ultimatum to convert to Judaism, or face eviction. The Edomites - now called the Idumeans - agreed to conversion, but in name only. The Hasmoneans appointed an Idumean, Antipater I, as magistrate of Idumea.

Antipater I made his son, Antipater II, a power broker in the region. When a civil war broke between two Hasmonean brothers for the position of king. Antipater II backed one brother and together they appealed to the Roman general, **Pompey** to intervene.



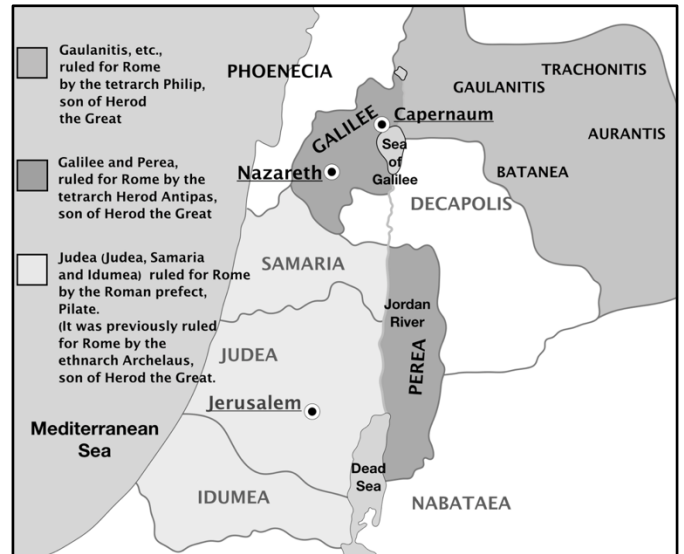
~63 BC Around 63 BC, the Romans came, but did not leave. Antipater II helped **Julius Caesar** establish Roman control of Judea. Around 47 BC Caesar appointed Antipater II the Roman procurator of Judea.

History of Israel: New Testament Period

~ 41 BC, Antipater II 's son, **Herod the Great**, was appointed tetrarch of Judea by Caesar's successor, **Marc Antony**. Herod continued to rule under **Octavian (Augustus Caesar)**, the first emperor of Rome.

Herod the Great murdered all who posed a threat to his rule, including two wives and three sons. He ordered the **slaughter in Bethlehem** of the boy babies two years old and younger after the **Wisemen** told him of the birth of the King of the Jews. When Herod died, his kingdom was divided amongst three of his sons.

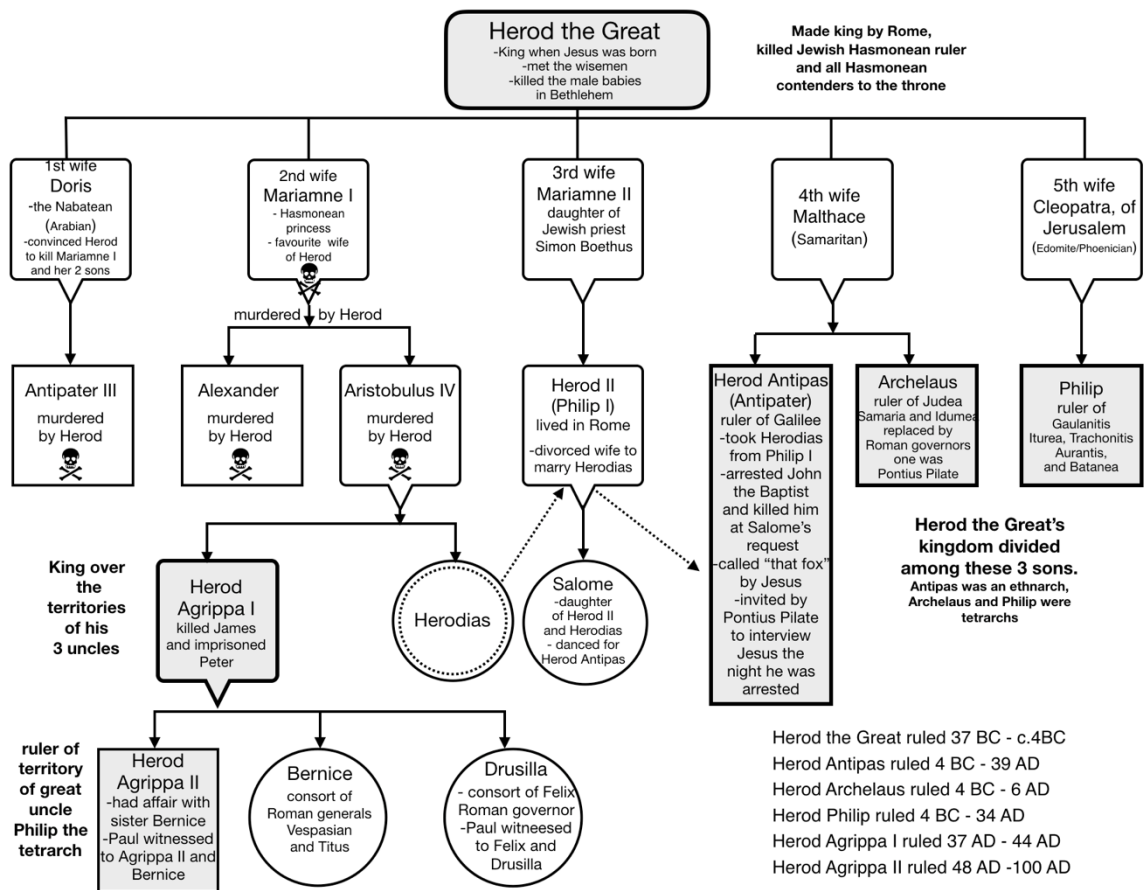
Archelaus became ethnarch of Judea, Samaria and Idumea. He was the reason Joseph took his family to Nazareth, rather than Judea, when returning from Egypt. Rome exiled him and put Roman procurators in his place. Pontius Pilate was the Roman procurator in the time of Jesus.



Philip became tetrarch of Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and Batanea.

Herod Antipas (Herod the Tetrarch) became tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. It was he who sentenced John the Baptist to death. Pilate sent Jesus to this

Herod, who was in Jerusalem at the time, for judgment. Jesus refused to answer Herod's questions, so Herod mocked Jesus and returned him to Pilate.



The Prophets

Isaiah:

Isaiah prophesied to the southern Kingdom of Judah in the times of the Assyrian Empire. He was a contemporary of the prophet Micah.

Of all the O.T. prophets, Isaiah wrote the most on the Messiah. He said the Messiah would rule in justice and righteousness; would bring peace and safety; would be a light to all nations; would reveal God's righteousness; would be the King; would be the Prince of Peace; would be despised and rejected; would be stricken by God and pierced for our transgressions; would heal through his wounds; would take our iniquities away by his suffering; and would be the ultimate and perfect sacrifice. *Source: GotQuestions.org*

Jeremiah:

Jeremiah lived in the final days of the southern kingdom of Judah. He repeatedly warned Judah of impending destruction if it did not repent of its idolatry, but the people were unmoved.

He saw Nebuzaradan, commander of Nebuchadnezzar's imperial guard, set fire to Solomon's Temple, the royal palace, and the buildings of Jerusalem; tear down its walls; and exile its people. But during the exile, he gave them this message from God, "You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again." (Jeremiah 29:10)

Jeremiah described the Messiah as a Branch from the house of David; the king who would reign in wisdom and righteousness; and provider of salvation for His chosen ones. *Source: GotQuestions.org*

Daniel

Daniel was one of the exiles in Babylon. He was a young man from Judah's royal household. He served in King Nebuchadnezzar's court, and for several of the rulers who followed.

He interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue and gave the prophecy of the four kingdoms that would rule over Judah before the coming of the Messiah: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

He knew Jeremiah's prophecies and realized that Jeremiah's seventy weeks of exile were coming to a close. While praying for the restoration of Jerusalem, the angel Gabriel gave him the prophecy of the seventy weeks. This prophecy gave the timeline for when the Messiah would come: sixty-nine weeks of years (69 x 7 years) from the time the Medo-Persians gave the order to rebuild Jerusalem. This prophecy also said that the Messiah would be killed, "appearing to have accomplished nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple."

God also sent a messenger who gave Daniel the prophecies about the times of the Seleucids (the king of the north) and the Ptolemies (the king of the south) in the intertestamental period.

Daniel described the Messiah as "one like a son of man" and said that "to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an

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everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."

Source: GotQuestions.org

Zechariah

Following the conquest of the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persians allowed the Judahite exiles to return and rebuild Jerusalem. Zechariah's grandfather was among the group who returned with Zerubbabel (Zerubbabel was a descendant of David, and the grandson of the last king to rule Judah before the exile). Zerubbabel became the first governor of Jerusalem). Zechariah saw Zerubbabel rebuild the Temple. He was a contemporary of the prophet Haggai.

Zechariah prophesied of the coming Messiah that He would come and dwell in their midst; would rule both as king and priest; would come riding on the colt of a donkey; would rule to the ends of the earth; would be counted as worth thirty pieces of silver by His people and that these thirty coins would be thrown to the potter in the Temple of the Lord; that on "that day" the people of Jerusalem would look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn ... as for an only son; and that He was the Lord of Heaven's Armies. *Source: GotQuestions.org*

The Pharisees and the Sadducees

In the time of Persian rule, the Torah (the five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) became the official law of the (now very small) Persian province of Judah (called by the Persians Avar-nahra). The Levites interpreted and taught the Torah to the people.

In the times of Greek rule, Hellenized Jews were given control of the priesthood. They were a wealthy and strong political group. Following the Maccabean Revolt, the Maccabees (the Hasmoneans) made themselves the chief priests. A group of scribes called the Hasidim supported the Hasmonean priests. The scribes were learned men who were responsible for writing copies of the Scriptures, knew the Law, and could interpret and teach it. The Hasidim were the forerunners of the Pharisees.

The Pharisees held that God gave Moses not only the written Torah but also an oral Torah. They claimed that the oral Torah was memorized and passed down from generation to generation and on to them. They based their interpretation of the Torah on these oral traditions and added many man-made traditions to what the written Scriptures said. They were the rabbis (the teachers) of the people in the New Testament. They taught in the synagogues throughout the Jewish communities and were the popular leaders of the crowds. (The synagogues had emerged as communal places for gathering, worship, and teaching during the Babylonian Exile. They were commonplace by the time of Jesus.)

Jesus condemned the teachings of the Pharisees, saying they elevated their own teachings above those of the Scriptures. The Pharisees largely rejected Jesus and His teachings. In pride, they

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claimed for themselves the position of leaders of God's chosen people, and interpreters and keepers of the Law.

The Sadducees were in charge of worship in the Temple. They were from the wealthier and priestly families and well connected with the ruling class. They rejected much of the teachings of the Pharisees such as the oral interpretation of the Torah; the prophetic books of the Bible as being inspired by God; the resurrection of the dead; and angels. They disappeared from Jewish life when the Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica: Judaism; *GotQuestions.org*

The Fate of Judea

In Jesus' parable of the Vineyard and its keepers, Jesus was speaking to the crowds, but His message was directed at the religious leaders. Those leaders would have been well aware that Jesus was, in that parable, drawing a direct connection between the vineyard and a prophecy in Isaiah, chapter five.

Isaiah the prophet had lived in the time before the Babylonian captivity. In Isaiah chapter five, the prophet warned the people of Judah that because they did not know Him, God would bring destruction on them, and they would be exiled far away. Isaiah said, "My beloved had a vineyard on a rich and fertile hill. He plowed the land, cleared its stones, and planted it with the best vines. In the middle, he built a watchtower and carved a winepress in the nearby rocks. Then he waited for a harvest of sweet grapes." Isaiah said that the nation of Israel was God's vineyard, but it failed to produce the sweet grapes. Isaiah gave this warning, "My people will go into exile far away because they do not know me ..." (Isaiah 5:1-2a;7a, 13a).

The religious leaders had Jesus crucified on Passover Friday, about 30 A.D. Within a couple of years, these leaders would lead such a fierce persecution of Jesus' followers that most would be forced to flee Judea. The rest would flee when the Roman armies came to Jerusalem. The strong Jewish church of Jerusalem was gone, but His fleeing followers took the church wherever they went throughout the Roman Empire.

There followed years of Jewish rebellion against Roman rule. In 70 A.D., Roman soldiers of General Titus came to lay siege to Jerusalem. They tore down Jerusalem, burned down the Temple and pulled it apart stone by stone, and killed hundreds of thousands of Jews in Jerusalem. But the Jews continued to fight.

In 130 A.D. Simon Bar Kokhba led the final Jewish rebellion. At first, he succeeded in freeing Jerusalem and reestablishing an independent Jewish state. The Jews thought that at last their Messiah had come. But the Romans crushed them, again massacred them by the hundreds of thousands, and sold the remaining as slaves throughout the Roman Empire. Hadrian banned all Jews from Jerusalem and renamed the Roman province of Judea as the province of Philistia (Palestine).

In Romans 11, Paul writes, "I ask, then, has God rejected his own people, the nation of Israel? ...¹¹ Did God's people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. ...^{25b} Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but

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this will last only until the full number of *Gentiles* comes to *Christ*... And so all *Israel* will be saved....²⁹For *God's* gifts and his call can never be withdrawn. ...³³Oh, how great are *God's* riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways

Healing: The Leper and the Paralyzed Man

Mark 1:38-45; 2:1-12

Before you read:

1. Have you ever known anyone who was healed of a serious disease? What happened? Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Change these False sentences to be True. Answers may vary.

1. Leprosy is a mental illness. - *Leprosy is a skin and nerve disease.*
2. Lepers cannot give the disease to others. *Leprosy can be passed on to others.*
3. Jesus did not want to heal the leper. *Jesus wanted to heal the leper, and he did.*
4. Jesus did not heal the paralyzed man because he had sinned. *Jesus forgave his sin and healed his body.*
5. The teachers of the law were happy when Jesus forgave sins. *The teachers of the law were angry because Jesus claimed God's authority.*

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| __d__ 1. indignant | a. dirty in a symbolic way |
| __f__ 2. demons | b. unable to move one's body |
| __g__ 3. testimony | c. a title from prophecy (about a future King who would rule the earth forever- Daniel 7: 13 - 14) |
| __a__ 4. ceremonially unclean | d. angry at unfairness |
| __c__ 5. Son of Man | e. power |
| __e__ 6. authority | f. evil spirits (who can take control of a person) |

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___h___7. blaspheming

g. proof

___b___8. paralyzed

h. showing disrespect for God

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. When the teacher said my child was stupid, I was ___indignant___!
2. The ___paralyzed___ man could not walk.
3. Jesus was accused of ___blasphemy___ when he said the man's sins were forgiven.
4. ___Demons___ are enemies of God.
5. According to the law of Moses, lepers were considered ___ceremonially unclean___.
6. Many people in a restaurant is a ___testimony___ that the food is good.
7. Jesus called himself the ___Son of Man___.
8. The city government has the ___authority___ to issue parking tickets.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. The leper came to Jesus and tells Him, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."
- B. Jesus healed the man, then sent him away immediately (so as not to draw attention) and told him to not tell anyone about this, but to go the priest and offer the sacrifices that were commanded for a healing.
- C. The leper didn't obey Jesus but told everyone that Jesus had healed him. This caused large crowds of people to want to come to Jesus; as a result, Jesus had to stay out in the wilderness to avoid attracting attention. (The crowds and the religious teachers had their own agenda for when Jesus should declare Himself their Messiah and how He should rule.)
- D. The friends of a paralyzed man brought him on a stretcher to Jesus. When the friends couldn't get into the house, they took apart the roof and lowered the paralyzed man down into the home.
- E. The Pharisees accused Jesus of blaspheming because He told the paralyzed man that his sins were forgiven - and only God had the authority to forgive sins.

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- F. Jesus told the Pharisees that He did indeed have the authority to forgive sins and he would demonstrate this by healing the paralyzed man. Jesus told the man to get up, roll up the mat he'd been lying on and go home. The man did so.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. In the first story, how bad is the disease of leprosy?
It is a serious disease that affects the whole body. It is mildly contagious.
2. What did Jesus do that was so unexpected?
He touched the leper.
3. What did Jesus tell the healed man to do?
He told him not to tell anyone but to go to a priest and make the required sacrifice.
4. In the second story, what did the four men do to help their friend?
They carried their friend to Jesus' house, dug a hole in the roof and lowered their friend in front of Jesus.
5. Why did the teachers of the law get upset?
When Jesus told the man his sins were forgiven, they thought Jesus was claiming to be God.
6. What did Jesus say to them?
Jesus asked whether it was easier to forgive a man's sins or tell him to rise up and walk out of there.
7. How did the healing of the man prove what Jesus had said?
His walking proved Jesus' authority. (Only God could have power to do this.)
8. How did the people feel who saw this? What do you think about this miracle?
They were amazed. (Opinions vary)

- *Intermediate*

1. In the first story, how bad is the disease of leprosy?
It is a terrible disfiguring disease and people who had it were social outcasts.
2. What did Jesus do that was so unexpected? Would you have done the same?
Jesus touched the man. (Opinions vary)
3. What did Jesus tell the healed man to do? Why do you think was this important?

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It would verify the healing and allow the man to re-enter society as being healed and clean.

4. In the second story, what did the four men do to help their friend? What does this show you about their friendship?

They carried their friend to Jesus and let nothing stop them. They were true friends.

5. What was the reason the teachers of the law got upset? Who did they think Jesus was claiming to be?

They got upset because only the offended can forgive the offender: Jesus was implying He was God or represented God.

6. What does Jesus answer reveal about himself?

He can read thoughts, he understands the issues, he challenges their beliefs and traditions.

7. How did the healing of the man prove what Jesus had said?

Jesus healed a man who was paralyzed. Where did his power come from? If it came from God then why not his words of forgiveness, too?

8. How did the people feel who saw this? What do you think about this miracle?

They were amazed. (Opinions vary)

9. In both stories Jesus does something unusual. What do you think about this?

(Opinions vary)

- *Challenging*

1. In the first story, how bad is the disease of leprosy? What do you know about it?

It is a terrible disfiguring disease and people who had it were social outcasts. (Answers vary)

2. What did Jesus do that was so unexpected? Would you have done the same? Jesus touched the man. (Opinions vary)

3. What did Jesus tell the healed man to do? Why do you think was this important?

It would verify the healing and allow the man to re-enter society as being healed and clean.

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They got upset because only the offended can forgive the offender: Jesus was implying He was *God* or represented *God*.
6. What does Jesus answer reveal about himself?
He can read thoughts, he understands the issues, he challenges their beliefs and traditions.
7. How did the healing of the man prove what Jesus had said?
Jesus healed a man who was paralyzed. Where did his power come from? If it came from *God* then why not his words of forgiveness, too?
8. How did the people feel who saw this? What do you think about this miracle?
They were amazed. (Opinions vary)
9. In both stories Jesus does something unusual. What do you think about this?
(Opinions vary)

Chapter One: Performing Miracles
1.2 Feeding of the 5000

Feeding of the 5000

Mark 6:35-44; John 6:22-48

Before you read:

1. When professionals (doctor, lawyer, teacher, etc.) from other countries want to work in Canada, what kinds of proof does the government require?
2. Is it important to have proof before accepting what people say about themselves?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. (The point of this is to get them thinking about Jesus' claims and the proof supporting them.)

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Put the story events in order from first to last:

- ___6___ The disciples took up 12 baskets of leftovers.
- ___2___ Large crowds followed after Jesus.
- ___3___ The disciples said it would take a lot of money to feed the crowds.
- ___7___ Jesus told the crowd that he could give them eternal food for eternal life, not just temporary food.
- ___5___ Jesus took five loaves and two fish, gave thanks to God, and divided the food among more than 5000 people.
- ___1___ Jesus and his disciples needed rest, so they went to a solitary place.
- ___4___ Jesus told his disciples to see what food was there.
- ___8___ Jesus called himself the Bread of Life.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.2 Feeding of the 5000

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| __e__ 1. solitary place | a. give life after physical death |
| __d__ 2. compassion | b. does not stop |
| __f__ 3. signs | c. force to leave |
| __b__ 4. endures | d. a kind feeling |
| __g__ 5. seal of approval | e. a place where there were no people |
| __c__ 6. drive away | f. actions that show something |
| __a__ 7. raise up | g. mark of official support or agreement |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. Jesus said he would ___raise up___ all people who believe in him and come to him on the last day.
2. Jesus said that he had God's ___seal of approval___.
3. Jesus said he would not ___drive away ___ anyone who comes to him.
4. Jesus and the disciples went by boat to a ___solitary place___ .
5. Jesus felt ___compassion___ for the hungry crowds.
6. Every bride and groom hope their marriage will ___endure___ .
7. Healing all diseases was a ___sign___ that Jesus was from God.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. Jesus and the disciples had left the crowds to go to a remote place by themselves. But the crowd came after them. The crowd was hungry, so the disciples told Jesus that He needed to send the people away to get some food.
- B. Jesus told the disciples to give the crowd food. When the disciples said they didn't have enough food, Jesus told them to go see how much they had. They found out and told Jesus they had 5 loaves and 2 fish. Jesus told the disciples to have all the people sit in groups. Then Jesus thanked God for the 5 loaves and 2 fish.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.2 Feeding of the 5000

- C. Jesus broke apart the loaves and fish, divided them into baskets and gave them to the disciples to give the people. There were 5000 people, and all had lots to eat.
- D. When the people were through eating, the disciples gathered up the leftovers - and there were 12 full baskets of leftovers.
- E. Immediately after this Jesus sent His disciples away by boat. Then Jesus sent the crowds away and went up on a mountain to pray.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. What problems did Jesus and his apostles have because of the crowds?
They did not even have a chance to eat. Taking care of all the people was tiring.
2. What did Jesus feel when he saw the crowds?
He felt compassion.
3. What did Jesus do with the bread and fish?
He gave thanks to God and then broke them in pieces and passed the pieces to his disciples to give to the crowds.
4. What is surprising about the leftovers?
The leftovers were more than what had been given Jesus.
5. What did the crowds want the next day? (If you had just gotten a free meal, would you have wanted to leave Jesus?)
They wanted more bread and miracles. (And people now are probably no different.)
6. Why do you think Jesus ordered his disciples to leave immediately after feeding the crowd?
Answers will vary. In John 6:15, Jesus saw the danger of the crowd's jumping ahead of God's plan. He may have been protecting his disciples from the crowd's demands or been concerned for their physical and spiritual well-being.
7. Where did Jesus say he came from?
He said he came from heaven and from God the Father.
8. What did Jesus do that proved he was from God?
Jesus healed all kinds of disease, and he fed 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish.
9. What did Jesus say about eternal life?

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.2 Feeding of the 5000

Jesus said: "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man (himself) will give you". "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

- *Intermediate*

1. Why were the disciples in the boat?

Jesus wanted to take them to a remote place so that they could rest.

2. What did Jesus feel when he saw the crowds?

Jesus felt compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

3. Why did Jesus ask the disciples to feed the crowds?

He wanted them to see that things they could not do by themselves they could depend on Jesus to do for them.

4. What did Jesus do with the small amount of food that was given to him?

He gave thanks to God for it and then distributed it.

5. Why is knowing what was left over important?

There was more left over than what had been given to Jesus. Jesus multiplied the food until there was an abundance for everyone.

6. What did the crowds want the next day?

They wanted more bread and miracles: to fill their stomachs with food and entertain their minds with wonders.

7. What did Jesus mean when he said He is the bread of life?

He was the only source of life and satisfaction.

8. How does someone receive eternal life according to Jesus?

Jesus said: "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

- *Challenging*

1. Why were the disciples in the boat?

Jesus wanted to take them to a remote place so that they could rest.

2. Why did Jesus ask the disciples to feed the crowds?

He wanted them to see that things they could not do by themselves they could depend on Jesus to do for them.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.2 Feeding of the 5000

3. **What did Jesus do with the small amount of food that was given to him?**
He gave thanks to God for it and then distributed it.
4. **Why is knowing what was left over important?**
There was more left over than what had been given to Jesus. Jesus multiplied the food until there was an abundance for everyone. Jesus can take the simplest of offerings and multiply it for the common good. Jesus always gives us beyond what we were expecting.
5. **Why did the crowds try to find Jesus the next day?**
They wanted more bread and miracles: to fill their stomachs with food and entertain their minds with wonders.
6. **What did Jesus accuse the crowds of wanting from him?**
A free lunch.
7. **In John 6:30 - 31 the crowd asks, "*What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? ³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'*" Why did the crowds want Jesus to give them a sign?**
They wanted him to prove himself, even though he had already given them a sign. (Were they so busy eating, they didn't notice?) They may have wanted more of a show and more food.
8. **What did Jesus mean when he said He is the bread of life?**
He was the only source of life and satisfaction.
9. **How does someone receive eternal life according to Jesus?**
Jesus said: "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."
10. **When is the 'last day'?**
The 'last day' is the end of time when Jesus will return to judge the world and give eternal life to those who look to him and believe in who he is.

Casting Out Demons

Mark 1:14-15;21-34; Mark 5:5-20

Before you read:

1. Do you know people who are afraid of evil spirits?
2. What do they do to try and protect themselves?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is those who belong to Jesus have freedom from fear. In many cultures that practice idol worship, this fear is real, and it is a barrier to leaving their old gods.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. Jesus taught like the other teachers of the law. F
2. Jesus told the demon at the synagogue to be quiet. F
3. The demon possessed man of the Gerasenes was very strong. T
4. The demons called themselves "Legion." T
5. The man went with Jesus after he was cured. F

Vocabulary

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

d 1. shriek

g 2. tomb

e 3. impure

f 4. plead

a. to hurt someone, often to get information from them

b. having an evil spirit inside you

c. to make something obey you

d. loud scream

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.3 Casting Out Demons

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| ___c___5. subdue | e. something evil or dirty |
| ___a___6. torture | f. beg for a favour |
| ___b___7. demon- possessed | g. a place where dead bodies are buried |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. The demons knew Jesus had authority to force them, so they had to ___plead___, for mercy
2. The man in the synagogue had an ___impure___ spirit.
3. That man was ___demon - possessed___.
4. The Gerasene man was so strong, no one could ___subdue___ him.
5. The demons begged Jesus not to ___torture___ them.
6. If I see a spider on me, I will ___shriek___, because I hate them.
7. Sometimes a family will build a large ___tomb___ , so when family members die, they can be buried in the same place.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. In the region of the Gerasenes was a man who was demon-possessed. He lived in the tombs, would cry out and cut himself with stones, and no one could control him.
- B. Jesus and His disciples arrived in the region of the Gerasenes by boat. When the demon-possessed man saw Jesus, he ran to Him. He asked what Jesus wanted with him. He told Jesus to not torture him. Interestingly he knows who Jesus is and calls Him, "Son of the Most High God."
- C. Jesus asked the man his name. The man said his name was Legion, for "we are many".
- D. The demons pleaded with Jesus to let them go into the herd of about 2000 pigs when He cast them out of the man.
- E. The demons then ran the herd of pigs down a steep bank into a lake and they drowned.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.3 Casting Out Demons

- F. When the people of the Gerasenes heard of this, they pleaded with Jesus to leave their region. The demon-possessed begged Jesus to take him with Him, but Jesus told the man to go home to his people and tell them what the Lord had done for him. The man did this, and everyone in the Decapolis who heard was amazed.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. What was Jesus doing in the synagogue?

Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. It was a place of learning.

2. What problem did the man have?

The man was possessed by an impure spirit.

3. What did the impure spirit say about Jesus? What does that mean?

The demon said: "*What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!*". The spirit knew who Jesus was and that He had the power to destroy the evil spirit.

4. Why do you think Jesus didn't allow the demon to speak?

The spirits do not speak with any authority that comes from God. They speak out of turn to destroy the work that Jesus had come to do. Jesus was slowly revealing himself to the world. He didn't want the world to recognize him in the wrong way.

5. In the second story, what was this man's problem?

The man was possessed by so many demons he had become crazy.

6. What name did Legion give to Jesus?

They called him, 'Son of the Most High God'

7. What happened to the pigs?

The demons filled the pigs and they all rushed down the steep bank and into the lake to drown.

8. Why didn't Jesus allow the man to follow him?

Jesus wanted him to go home and tell others what Jesus had done for him.

9. What do these stories reveal about Jesus?

He has authority over all evil spirits. They fear him and can't stand against him.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.3 Casting Out Demons

- *Intermediate*

1. What happened in the synagogue? Does this story surprise you?
Jesus heals the demon possessed man. (Answers vary.)
2. What did the people say about Jesus after this event?
They were surprised by his authority, that even the demons obeyed him.
3. In the second story, why was the demon-possessed man terrified when Jesus came towards him? Why did the demons beg Jesus not to torture them?
The demons recognized who he was and knew their fate. They had a comfortable place inside the Gerasene man, and in Satanic fashion they were seeking to torture and destroy this creature made in God's image. The ESV STUDY BIBLE commentary notes that Jesus' order to 'Come out' was given in the imperfect tense, meaning He had been ordering them, and they may have been enduring torture because they delayed obeying. Also their darkness was exposed to God's light in Jesus.
4. Why did Jesus send the demons into the pigs?
The demons needed somewhere to go. (Luke 11: 24- 26: "*When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.'*"²⁵ *When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order.*"²⁶ *Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first.*") The frightened pigs died, taking the demons with them.
5. Why didn't the townspeople welcome Jesus?
They were frightened by these events and the evidence of Jesus' power.
6. What things do you find frightening or interesting about this story?
(Answers vary.)
7. In these two stories, we learn that Jesus has authority over the demons. How does this truth make you feel?
(Answers vary.)

- *Challenging*

1. In the first story, what was Jesus' purpose in travelling village to village in Galilee?
Jesus was preaching and teaching about the kingdom of God.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.3 Casting Out Demons

2. **What happened in the synagogue? Does anything in this story surprise you?**
Jesus heals the demon possessed man. (Answers vary.)
3. **Why do you think Jesus forbade the demon to speak?**
The spirits do not speak with any authority that comes from God. They speak out of turn to destroy the work that Jesus had come to do. Jesus was slowly revealing himself to the world. He didn't want the world to recognize him in the wrong way.
4. **What did the people say about Jesus after this event?**
They were surprised by his authority, that even the demons obeyed him.
5. **In the second story, we learn the demon possessed man was extremely strong so why was he terrified when Jesus came towards him?**
The demons recognized who he was and knew their fate. They had a comfortable place inside the Gerasene man, and in Satanic fashion they were seeking to torture and destroy this creature made in God's image. The ESV STUDY BIBLE commentary notes that Jesus' order to 'Come out' was given in the imperfect tense, meaning He had been ordering them, and they may have been enduring torture because they delayed obeying. Also their darkness was exposed to God's light in Jesus.
6. **Why did Jesus allow the demons to enter the pigs? What does the pigs' reaction tell you about the number and strength of the demons?**
The demons needed somewhere to go. Jesus didn't want the demons to return to the man. (Luke 11: 24- 26: "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' ²⁵ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first.") The pigs were terrified, and they were a big herd. This was a large and powerful number of demons.
7. **Why do you think the townspeople didn't thank Jesus for helping the man?**
(Answers vary.) They were fearful and wanted to avoid Jesus.
8. **Why didn't Jesus allow the healed man to follow him?**
Jesus wanted him to go home and tell others what Jesus had done for him.
9. **What things do you find frightening or interesting about this story?**
(Answers vary.)

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.3 Casting Out Demons

10. In these two stories, we learn that Jesus has authority over the demons. How does this truth make you feel?
(Answers vary.)

Chapter One: Performing Miracles
1.4 Ruling Nature

Ruling Nature

Mark 4:35-41, Mark 6:46-56

Before you read:

1. Have you ever experienced a natural disaster such as a storm, earthquake or flood?
2. What feelings did you have at the time?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is to recognize the power of nature and the greater power of its Creator.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Match the verses on the left to the event on the right. *On the left side are verses about God. On the right side are events story verses about Jesus.*

God

Jesus

(verses in New Living Translation)

a 1. "You rule the oceans. You subdue their storm-tossed waves." Ps 89:9

d 2. "He alone has spread out the heavens and marches on the waves of the sea...He does great things too marvelous to understand..." Job 9: 8,10

b 3. "He spoke, and the winds rose, stirring up the waves. Their ships were tossed to the heavens and plunged again to the depths; the sailors cringed in terror." Ps. 107: 25-26

a. The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!" Mark 4: 41

b. But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. Mark 4:37

c. The disciples woke him up, shouting, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?" Jesus...rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm Mark 4: 38-39

___c___ 4. "LORD, Help!" they cried in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He calmed the storm to a whisper and stilled the waves." Ps. 107: 28-29

d. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water... Then he climbed into the boat, and the wind stopped. They were totally amazed. Mark 6: 48, 51

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| ___c___ 1. shoreline | a. to speak in a firm and critical way |
| ___g___ 2. fierce | b. to serve, help |
| ___e___ 3. ghost | c. the land along the edge of a lake or ocean |
| ___a___ 4. rebuke | d. very afraid |
| ___b___ 5. minister | e. the soul of a dead person, that people can see |
| ___d___ 6. terrified | f. try very hard to do something that is difficult |
| ___f___ 7. struggle | g. very violent, very strong |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. Although it was a ___fierce___ storm, Jesus stopped it.
2. Teaching and healing were ways Jesus would ___minister___ to people.
3. When Jesus ___rebuked___ the wind and the waves, the lake became calm.
4. There were many villages along the ___shoreline___ of the Sea of Galilee.
5. The disciples ___struggled___ to keep the boat from sinking.
6. The disciples thought Jesus was a ___ghost___ and it ___terrified___ them.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. Jesus and the disciples were sailing across the Sea of Galilee when a sudden and fierce storm came up. The boat was in danger of sinking. Jesus had been sleeping when this happened. The disciples woke him up shouting, "Don't you care, we're going to drown?"
- B. Jesus woke up and rebuked the wind and waves, telling them to "Be still." Everything suddenly became calm. Jesus then asked the disciples why they had been afraid, and did they still have no faith.
- C. The disciples were terrified by what Jesus could do, and why He was able to do this. They asked each other, "Who is this man?"
- D. After a long day of ministry, Jesus had insisted that his disciples sail across the Sea of Galilee back to Bethsaida on their own. He didn't go with them but spent the night alone in the hills praying.
- E. A strong windstorm came up and Jesus could see that the disciples were in serious trouble, struggling against the wind. It was about 3 in the morning. Jesus walked toward them, on the water. When the disciples saw this, they thought he was a ghost and were terrified.
- F. Jesus spoke to them immediately, telling them to not be afraid, and to take courage because He was there. When Jesus got into the boat, the wind stopped, and the disciples were amazed.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. In the first story, why were the disciples terrified of the storm?
The waves were high, and water was pouring into the boat.
2. What did Jesus do when the disciples woke him up?
He rebuked the wind and he told the waves to be silent and still. Then he asked the disciples why they had been afraid, and did they still have no faith.
3. In the second story, why were the disciples terrified when Jesus came towards them?

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

They thought he was a ghost. Since there isn't talk of ghosts in the Bible, only of angels and demons, they may have thought this was a demon coming towards them. Since demons come to kill, steal, and destroy, that would explain their terror.

4. In the second story, why did Jesus send the disciples across the lake by themselves?

He apparently wanted time alone to pray. He often took time alone to pray.

5. In the second story, why didn't the disciples recognize Him?

It was night, and a stormy night so they would not have been able to see him clearly. And they were not expecting him; especially not coming to them by walking on the water.

6. What things do you find frightening? Terrifying?

Answers vary. You can discuss fear. The Bible talks about fear of the Lord, which is a proper reverence and respect. The Bible also talks about the spirit of fear. 2 Timothy 1:7 says that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. There are many verses telling us to trust God and not fear.

7. How could Jesus have this kind of power over Nature?

This question is challenging unbelieving students to consider Jesus' divine nature, but the Holy Spirit must bring them to this conclusion. The Matching exercise makes it clear: Psalm 89 says that God rules the oceans and subdues the waves. Psalm 107 says that God calms storms and stills the waves. This is what Jesus did in the first story. Job 9:8,10 says that God marches on the waves of the sea. This also, Jesus did.

- *Intermediate*

1. In the first story, why were the disciples terrified of the storm?

The waves were high and pouring over and into the boat. The boat was small, so it would soon sink. These were fishermen and they understood fully the danger they were in.

2. Did Jesus know that a storm was coming, before he told his disciples to sail across the Sea of Galilee?

Yes, he would have. He showed that he knew the future when he told Peter that he (Peter) would betray him. He saw Nathanael under the fig tree before Philip called him.

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

3. What do you think it was like in that boat?

The boats were small. The story says the boats held maybe 15 or so people, and there were 12 disciples, so they would be close to the edge of the boat where the water was pouring in. It was dark because of the storm, and the wind and water would have soaked them. They would be cold, wet, and terrified knowing that the sinking of the boat was imminent.

4. In the second story, why were the disciples terrified when Jesus came towards them?

They thought he was a ghost. Since there isn't talk of ghosts in the Bible, only of angels and demons, they may have thought this was a demon coming towards them. Since demons come to kill, steal, and destroy, that would explain their terror.

5. Jesus told the disciples to row across the lake, knowing they would have to struggle against a wind. Why do you think Jesus did this?

Jesus would have known that the storm was coming, so he also wanted to teach them to trust him, even when it looked like he had set them a frustrating task. This also created a situation in which he could show them his power - and therefore who he was.

6. Why didn't the disciples recognize Him?

It was night, and a stormy night so they would not have been able to see him clearly. And they were not expecting him; especially not coming to them by walking on the water.

7. What things do you find frightening? Terrifying?

Answers vary. You can discuss fear. The Bible talks about fear of the Lord, which is a proper reverence and respect. The Bible also talks about the spirit of fear. 2 Timothy 1:7 says that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. There are many verses telling us to trust God and not fear.

8. In these two stories, Mark is clearly telling his readers that Jesus is God. How do these stories show that this is true?

Psalm 89 says that God rules the oceans and subdues the waves. Psalm 107 says that God calms storms and stills the waves. This is what Jesus did in the first story. Job 9:8,10 says that God marches on the waves of the sea. This also, Jesus did.

9. What might it be like when Jesus returns and rules the earth?

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

There will be worldwide peace - Isaiah 2:4 says that the nations will not war - and Creation will be restored (Romans 8:18-23). So perhaps there will be no more storms.

- *Challenging*

1. **In the first story, why were the disciples terrified of the storm?**

The waves were high and pouring over and into the boat. The boat was small, so it would soon sink. These were fishermen and they understood fully the danger they were in. They did not yet fully understand who Jesus was or that it was not his will that they perish.

2. **Did Jesus know that a storm was coming, before he told his disciples to sail across the Sea of Galilee?**

Yes, he would have. He showed that he knew the future when he told Peter that he (Peter) would betray him. He saw Nathanael under the fig tree before Philip called him. Isaiah 46:9-10 says that God declares the end from the beginning, and his purposes will be established.

3. **What was it like in that boat?**

The boats were small. The story says the boats held maybe 15 or so people, and there were 12 disciples, so they would be close to the edge of the boat where the water was pouring in. It was dark because of the storm, and the wind and water would have soaked them. They would be cold, wet, and terrified knowing that the sinking of the boat was imminent.

4. **In the second story, why were the disciples terrified when Jesus came towards them?**

They thought he was a ghost. Since there isn't talk of ghosts in the Bible, only of angels and demons, they may have thought this was a demon coming towards them. Since demons come to kill, steal, and destroy, that would explain their terror.

5. **John tells us that when this story occurred, Passover was near. Passover is celebrated in the time of a full moon. How does this play into the story?**

The moon would have been almost full, and therefore there would have been a lot of moonlight out that night. This moonlight would have lit up the night. The moonlight would enable them to see Jesus walking toward them and would make Jesus look silvery. (Windstorms are not always accompanied by clouds.)

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

6. Jesus told the disciples to row across the lake, knowing they would have to struggle against a wind. Why do you think Jesus did this, and why do you think he sent the disciples across the lake by themselves? Have you ever done a task that was frustrating and seemingly meaningless?

Since Jesus would have known that the storm was coming, he did this purposely. He may have wanted to teach them to trust him even when he sent them into a frustrating situation, and to show them his power - and therefore who he was. Answers will vary on whether the students have experienced a frustrating task and what meaning they may have learned from it.

7. Why didn't the disciples recognize Him?

It was night, and a stormy night so they would not have been able to see him clearly. And they were not expecting him; especially not coming to them by walking on the water.

8. Why did Jesus put his disciples through both these terrifying trials?

This story comes right after the feeding of the 5000, and the disciples may have thought their life would be a piece of cake. But here Jesus is strengthening them for what really lies ahead. And he is teaching them more about who he is. Also, they were directly obeying him when they rowed out into the lake at night; therefore, the storm they faced was not a punishment for disobedience.

9. What things do you find frightening? Terrifying?

Answers vary. You can discuss their experiences with fear. The Bible talks about fear of the Lord, which is a proper reverence and respect. The Bible also talks about the spirit of fear. 2 Timothy 1:7 says that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. There are many verses telling us to trust God and not fear.

10. In these two stories, Mark is clearly telling his readers that Jesus is God. How do these stories show that this is true?

Psalms 89 and 107 say that God rules the oceans and subdues the waves. Psalm 107 says that God calms storms and stills the waves. This is what Jesus did in the first story. Job 9:8,10 says that God marches on the waves of the sea. This also, Jesus did.

11. What might it be like when Jesus returns and rules the earth?

We've seen in this chapter that Jesus could heal incurable (at that time) diseases, feed a huge crowd by producing more than enough food from one small lunch, control demons, and rule nature. Therefore, when He rules,

Chapter One: Performing Miracles

1.4 Ruling Nature

there will be no more sickness, hunger, demonic activity, or fear of nature. There will be worldwide peace - Isaiah 2:4 says that the nations will not war - and Creation will be restored (Romans 8:18-23). So perhaps there will be no more storms. Since Jesus healed people of extreme diseases, we would also expect there to be no disease.

Parable of the Farmer

Mark 4:1-20

Before you read:

1. Have you ever grown anything? (Flowers, vegetables or fruit?)
2. What kind of soil is best for growing things?

Feel free to share your own experiences and encourage a few students to do the same. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is to get any prior knowledge of farming, even in a small way.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Soil Problems

Jesus described four types of soil: 1) footpath 2) shallow 3) thorny and 4) good Put the number of the soil beside the conditions for growing seeds (*There may be more than one answer*):

- a. Harmful, wild plants grow too quickly and steal the seed's sun and water. ___3___
- b. The soil is so hard that the seed can't enter it. ___1___
- c. The soil is soft, has water, is rich, and contains no wild seed. ___4___
- d. The seed roots can't get deep enough for water. ___2___
- e. The seed starts to grow, but then it dies. ___2, 3___

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ___c___1. fertile | a. thin, not deep |
| ___e___2. persecute | b. become dry and weak |
| ___f___3. footpath | c. able to produce well |
| ___a___4. shallow | d. sharp points on weeds and plants |
| ___g___5. sprout | e. treat someone badly |

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.1 Parable of the Farmer

__b__ 6. wilt

f. a narrow path through a field

__d__ 7. thorns

g. when a seed grows a stem and leaves

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. People would walk on a ____footpath____ through the fields.
2. Soil that is very ____fertile__ can grow lots of good things.
3. Seed can still ____sprout____ in ____shallow____ soil, but the plant can't get enough water.
4. If a plant can't get enough water, it will ____wilt____ in the sun.
5. Wear gloves when pulling up weeds, because some weeds have ____thorns____.
6. Some people leave their countries because others ____persecute____ them there.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. The sower sows seeds in his field. The seed that lands on the footpath is eaten by birds.
- B. The soil on the pathway is too hard for the seeds to grow in, and the seed is trampled by people walking there.
- C. Some soil is too shallow because it has underlying rock. The plants grow at first, but soon die because they cannot establish good roots.
- D. Some soil contains weeds and thorns that crowded out the plants.
- E. Some soil is fertile, and a good crop is produced.
- F. When the disciples asked about the parable, Jesus explained it to them.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. Why did the disciples ask Jesus to explain the parable to them?
They didn't understand the parable, and - unlike many of the people who heard Jesus preach - they wanted to understand his teachings.

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.1 Parable of the Farmer

2. What does the farmer's seed represent?

It represents the Word of God. Jesus was spreading the words of his teachings over the crowds, as a farmer spreads seeds over a field.

3. What does the footpath represent?

Hardened hearts. A footpath is hardened soil that does not let a seed enter it and grow, nor does it let water in to water the seed.

4. What does the rocky soil represent?

Shallow hearts. The rock in that region of land was often flat sheets of limestone under a shallow layer of soil. So seeds could start off well, but once their roots hit the rock layer, the plant could no longer get enough water and nutrients.

5. What are some of the thorns of life?

These are the cares of the world. Answers will vary, but worries about the future, about security, about acceptance, etc.

6. What does the good soil represent?

Good hearts. A heart that is tender and able to take in and nourish what it is taught is like soil that has the right amount of softness, nutrients, and water.

7. How did Jesus explain his reason for using parables?

Jesus said that he was fulfilling the scriptures of Isaiah, which said the people would not learn or understand when he taught them and demonstrated truth. Only those who really wanted to know about God and believed Jesus came from God could perceive the truth because they were open to it. (This parable about the soils represents those different people.)

8. An old wise saying is, "People only hear what they want to hear". Do you think that is true?

Answers will vary. Feel free to give an example of your own. This echoes the message of Isaiah 6: 9-10.

9. People have different reactions to hearing about God. What reactions have you noticed? Can you compare them to the 4 soils?

Footpath: There is no God; God does not concern me. Shallow: Following God is hard. It's easier the way I do things. Why change? Thorny: I don't have time for God with my work and responsibilities, etc. (The examples are endless.)

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.1 Parable of the Farmer

- *Intermediate*

1. **Why did Jesus teach the crowds from a boat in the water?**

This let him escape being crushed by the crowds. And it let all the people see and hear him as he taught. Also, since the Sea of Galilee was surrounded by hills, then there would be a natural amphitheatre for anyone speaking from a boat off the shoreline of a bay.

2. **Psalm 14:1 says, "Only fools say in their hearts, 'There is no God.'" What type of soil is this person?**

Answers could vary, but most likely the footpath soil - so hard that it won't let a seed enter it, nor the water to nourish it.

3. **Why do you think Jesus did not teach the spiritual truths of the parables to everyone?**

The Pharisees were looking for anything Jesus said that they could spin into a charge against him - and so arrest him before his time. Also, the more you know, the more you are responsible for - those who had understood the teaching yet still rejected it would be judged more harshly than those who did not understand it. Luke 12:47-48 says that a servant who knows his master's will and doesn't do it will receive a severe beating, but the one who did not know would receive a light beating. James 3:1 says that teachers will be judged more severely than others.

4. **Can you have joy in God, but still be shallow in your relationship with him?**

Yes, because Jesus' teaching here says that seed sown in rocky (shallow) soil sprouts up quickly with joy. And that the word of God sewn in people with shallow hearts will also grow up quickly with joy - but soon fall away because their roots don't grow deep enough to survive hardship.

5. **Did the farmer know what type of soil he is throwing the seed on?**

The farmer wouldn't know beforehand because he throws his seed before he ploughs his field - so he doesn't know if there is rock under the soil, or the seeds of thorns in that soil. But Jesus did know the type of hearts he was sewing his words in - yet he spread it to all people.

6. **What is most important to producing a good crop - the farmer, the seed, or the soil?**

Answers can vary here. All three are important. But it seems that the thrust of these two paragraphs are about the type of soil - the condition of a person's heart.

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.1 Parable of the Farmer

7. **What type of roots do people need in order to grow a good crop?**
Roots that can reach water and nutrients. Ephesians 5:26 says we are cleansed by washing in the water of the Word. So we need to be in the Word often in order to be healthy and not wilt away when things get difficult.
 8. **Good soil can likely produce maybe 10 times more than what was sown. What spiritual truth was Jesus teaching when he said the good soil could produce an impossibly big crop of 30, 60 or 100 times?**
We effect much more - for our own maturity and welfare and much more for the salvation and welfare of others - than we are aware of when we let the Word of God grow in us.
- ***Challenging***
 1. **What do the birds represent in the parable? Why are birds a good metaphor?**
Birds are used a lot in Scripture and can be symbolic of several things. In this parable, they could mean any distraction or preoccupation that diverts your attention from the seeds that were thrown your way. GotQuestions.org says they are used here to show that God's Word is valued as nothing more than birdseed to those with hard hearts.
 2. **Why didn't Jesus teach the spiritual truths of the parable to everyone?**
The Pharisees were looking for anything Jesus said that they could spin into a charge against him - and so arrest him before his time. Also, the more you know, the more you are responsible for - those who had understood the teaching yet still rejected it would be judged more harshly than those who did not understand it. Luke 12:47-48 says that a servant who knows his master's will and doesn't do it will receive a severe beating, but the one who did not know would receive a light beating. James 3:1 says that teachers will be judged more severely than others.
 3. **Why did the sower sew seed on all types of soil, rather than just on the good soil?**
The farmer wouldn't know beforehand because he throws his seed before he ploughs his field - so he doesn't know if there is rock under the soil, or the seeds of thorns in that soil. But Jesus did know the type of hearts he was sewing his words in - yet he still spread it to all people. The crowds were large, and Jesus had only three years at most to preach, so the most

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.1 Parable of the Farmer

efficient way for him to reach the most people with good hearts was to widely broadcast his teachings to the crowds.

4. **Why do people accept Jesus, then return to their old lives and stop following him?**

They are like the rocky soil. In that region, the rock was often in the form of a layer of limestone, covered by a shallow layer of soil. Jesus said in the parable of the soils that seed that fell on shallow soil would sprout - but wilt away when their roots encountered the rock. In his explanation to the disciples, Jesus said that people with shallow hearts would receive the word with joy but fall away as soon as they encountered difficulty. Some people really only accepted and enjoyed Christian community, not Christ himself. And so, when they return to home countries with no Christian community, they quickly rejoin their own community and don't miss the Jesus they never knew.

5. **Galatians 5:22-23 says, "The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love; joy; peace; patience; kindness; goodness; faithfulness; gentleness ; and self-control.**

6. **What is most important to producing a good crop - the farmer, the seed, or the soil?**

Answers can vary here. All three are important. But it seems that the thrust of these two paragraphs are about the type of soil - the condition of a person's heart.

7. **How was this parable also a picture of Jesus' ministry?**

Jesus (the farmer) spread his Word (the seed) on all types of hearts (soil). The success of these seeds depended on the hearts (soils) of the hearers. Many in the crowds turned away from him when they faced the hard reality (the rocks) that he had not come only to cure their diseases and feed them. Many of the Pharisees, like the hard ground, refused to let his Word have any place in their lives. But those who did hear and accepted and nourished his teachings produced a phenomenal crop, and faith in him spread globally.

8. **What kind of roots do people need in order to grow a good crop? How can they increase their root size?**

Roots that can reach water and nutrients. Ephesians 5:26 says we are cleansed by washing in the water of the Word. So, we need to be in the Word often in order to be healthy and not wilt away when things get

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2.1 Parable of the Farmer

difficult. And remove from our lives, barriers like that rock, that limit the growth of our roots.

9. **Jesus didn't talk about synthetic seed; there wasn't any in his time. But today we have genetically altered seeds. What would synthetic seed represent?**
Altered seed would be altered Word. It would be teachings that added or took away from what the Bible say about Jesus. We can engineer tomatoes to grow better in a difficult climate. Some think they can also improve the Scriptures to make it more acceptable to those who find it difficult to accept - and so they make "alterations" - to who Jesus is. The Pharisees of Jesus' time wanted a Messiah who would take on Roman occupation; problem was they missed the real Messiah and didn't get saved.
10. **Good soil can likely produce maybe 10 times more than what was sown. What spiritual truth was Jesus teaching when he said the good soil could produce an impossibly big crop of 30, 60 or 100 times?**
We affect much more - for our own maturity and welfare and much more for the salvation and welfare of others - than we are aware of when we let the Word of God grow in us.

Who Can Enter Heaven?

Mark 10:17-31

Before you read:

1. What are your thoughts about what happens after death?
2. What formed your ideas?

Encourage a few students to share their thoughts and what influenced their concepts of the afterlife. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is to focus on the lesson topic and consider what we recognize as authority for truth.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. The young ruler respected Jesus. T
2. Jesus offered the young man treasure in heaven. T
3. The young man decided to follow Jesus. F
4. The disciples had given up everything to follow Jesus. T
5. Jesus said anyone who followed him would have an easy life. F

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| <u> d </u> 1. prosperous | a. to tell what one saw and heard |
| <u> c </u> 2. inherit | b. amazed, astonished, greatly surprised |
| <u> h </u> 3. moreover | c. to receive something when someone dies |
| <u> a </u> 4. testify | d. rich |
| <u> f </u> 5. cheat | e. going after someone to hurt them because of hate |
| <u> b </u> 6. astounded | f. To steal something by lying or tricking |

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2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

- __g__7. intently g. showing great attention, concentration
__e__8. persecution h. in addition to what has been said

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. The man ___testified___ falsely to the police that the car was his, because he wanted to ___cheat___ the woman out of her property.
2. She will ___inherit___ her parents' house when they die.
3. The disciples were ___astounded___ when Jesus said it was humanly impossible to be saved.
4. The young man was ___prosperous___. ___Moreover___, others thought he was a good man and made him a synagogue ruler.
5. Jesus promised that whatever his followers gave up, God would replace, but they would still face ___persecution___.
6. Jesus looked at his disciples ___intently___, so they knew he was telling them something very important.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. A rich young ruler, someone who was well respected in his community, came to Jesus and asked Him what he must do to inherit eternal life.
- B. Jesus engaged him in conversation. First He asked the man why he called Him good, since only God is good. Then Jesus talked to him about the commandments; the young ruler said he obeyed these commandments. Then Jesus challenged the ruler to give away all he had, leave it and follow Him - and he would have treasure in heaven.
- C. The young ruler sadly went away, because he couldn't give up his many possessions.
- D. Jesus told his disciples that it was hard to enter the Kingdom of God, and it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich man to do this.
- E. The disciples were astounded by what Jesus said and asked who could be saved.

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2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

- F. Jesus told them that it was impossible to be saved, humanely speaking - but everything is possible with God.

The disciples then told Jesus that (unlike the rich ruler) they had given up everything to follow Him. Jesus assured them that they would receive a hundred times more than they had given up - and they would receive persecution as well. And they would receive eternal life in the world to come. And that many who were important in this world would be unimportant then, and vice versa.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. What did the man ask Jesus?

The man asked Jesus what he had to do to inherit eternal life.

2. What do we know about the young man?

We know that he was young, that he was wealthy, that he followed the Mosaic law, and that others respected him enough to make him a ruler of a synagogue.

3. What did Jesus say about being good?

Jesus said that only God is truly good.

4. Had the man obeyed all the commandments Jesus asked him about?

The man said that he had obeyed all of them. He had been made a synagogue ruler, so we know that others thought him to be obedient. But he may be being generous with himself in saying he had not broken any of them. 1 John 1:8 says that he who thinks he is without sin deceives only himself.

5. What did Jesus ask the man to do?

He asked the man to sell all his possessions, give the proceeds to the poor, and then follow Him.

6. Why did the man walk away and not become a disciple?

He found it too difficult to give up his wealth.

7. What had the disciples given up?

They had given up their living, their way of life, their hometowns, (and most would give up their lives in future).

8. What did Jesus say about the greatest and the least of people?

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2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

Jesus said the people who are the greatest now will be least important in eternity, and those who are least important now would be greatest then.

9. What do you think Jesus means when he talked about the camel and needle's eye?

He wants us to know how dangerous love of material things can be. The young ruler probably saw himself as 'good', and he did not want to change his life. He was not willing to follow Jesus completely and trade his comfortable life for a life of dependence on God in faith.

- *Intermediate*

1. What do we know about this young ruler?

We know that he is young, that he has been successful in whatever work he has done and is wealthy, that he followed the Mosaic law, and that he had led a commendable life - for others had made him a synagogue ruler.

2. The young ruler said he followed the 10 commandments. Did the young ruler believe that following these commandments guaranteed him eternal life? Explain your answer.

The young ruler could not have believed he was guaranteed eternal life by following the commandments, because he asked Jesus what he must (still) do to inherit eternal life.

3. Jesus taught that if a man hated another person, then they had as good as murdered that person; that if he ever looked at another woman with desire for her, then he had as good as committed adultery. Do you think the man had ever done these things?

Most likely the young man had done these things, for the Bible says there is no one righteous, not even one (Romans 3:10). 1 John 1:8 says that he who thinks he is without sin deceives only himself.

4. What did Jesus say about a rich man entering the Kingdom of God?

Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.

5. What did Jesus tell the disciples about who can be saved?

Jesus said that it was humanly impossible for people to be saved, but it was possible with God.

6. Why do you think Jesus asked the young ruler, "Why do you call me good?"

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

The young ruler called Jesus "good teacher". Jesus is challenging the young ruler to see that He is more than a teacher, that He is God. So, if the young ruler walks away (and he did), he will be walking away from God Himself.

7. **Why had the man walked away rather than become a disciple?**

He counted the cost, and valued his wealth more than being a disciple, and having wealth now more than treasures in heaven.

8. **What had the disciples given up? What was their reward?**

They had given up their living, their way of life, their community, and would give up their lives as well. Jesus said their reward would be eternal life, and a hundred times as many houses, property, and family as they had given up. He also promised them persecution.

9. **What did Jesus say about the least and the greatest?**

Jesus said that those who were (regarded as) least in the world would be the greatest in Heaven, and those who were (regarded as) the greatest in the world would be the least in Heaven.

- ***Challenging***

1. **What do we know about the rich young ruler?**

We learn that he is young, that he has been successful in whatever work he has done and is wealthy, that he followed the Mosaic law, and that he had led a commendable life - for others had made him a synagogue ruler.

2. **In Canada you may here the expression "quid pro quo". It is a Latin expression that means, "something for something", that is: "If I do this (or give this), then I get (deserve) that."**

a. **The young ruler said he'd followed the 10 Commandments from his youth. Did he believe, then, that he deserved eternal life? Explain your answer.**

No, the young ruler didn't believe he had done enough to have eternal life - we know this because he asked Jesus what he could do to have eternal life.

b. **Did the young ruler have a quid pro quo mindset, or did he think he needed grace to have eternal life?**

No. The fact that he still thought he could do something to have eternal life, shows that he still had a quid pro quo mindset. He did not yet see the true condition of his heart and his need for grace.

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2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

- c. **What was the first thing Jesus said when the man asked his question?**
Jesus asked him why he called Him good. Then He said that only God is truly good.
 - d. **Why do you think Jesus asked this question?**
He is challenging the man as to who he thinks Jesus is - is he willing to see that only God is good, and that Jesus is good because he is God. And that if he walks away from Him (and the young ruler did), he will be walking away from God, not a teacher.
3. **Jesus taught that if a man hated another person, then they had as good as murdered that person; that if he ever looked at another woman with desire for her, then he had as good as committed adultery. Do you think this man had committed those sins? Do you think he was aware that these things were sins?**
Most likely the man had hated someone or felt lust for a woman. 1 John 1:8 says that he who thinks he is without sin deceives only himself. But he may not have been aware that these were sins because the law hadn't directly specified them as such. And he may have been in denial about having done those things. But a righteous person would have been aware that these were sins against God, for the OT shows Amnon lusting after his stepsister Tamar and the bad consequences of this (2 Sam 13); and David lusting after Bathsheba and the consequences of this (2 Sam 11).
4. **The Bible says we are all sinners. The term sin comes from archery, and it means that the arrow missed the target.**
 - a. **Why do we all miss the mark?**
We are not aware enough of our own sin because we are not spiritually mature enough to recognize it; or we are in denial about it; because we are surrounded by it in our culture; and because we are all fallible. Jeremiah 17:9 says that the heart is desperately sick and beyond cure, who can understand it.
 - b. **Why had the young ruler walked away rather than become a disciple?**
He valued his wealth above riches in heaven, and above being with Jesus. Perhaps also, he didn't realize who Jesus was and did not believe that Jesus could give him eternal life - but even then, he did know that Jesus was righteous, and he didn't value being with a righteous teacher more than his wealth. And it was his responsibility to search out who Jesus really is.

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2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

- c. How could his life have been different, had he said yes at that time?

This story took place as Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem and the cross. The young man missed out on the raising of Lazarus, on the Last Supper, on the Garden of Gethsemane, the resurrection, the Holy Spirit, and the Great Commission. He missed out on being with Jesus both in his life and in eternal life. (About 40 years later, the Romans would invade Judea and kill hundreds of thousands of Jews who were there and would tear down the Temple. If the young ruler had been in Judea at the time, he would not have missed out on that destruction.)

- d. Do you think he ever said yes?

We can't know. But he was face to face with Jesus and said no to Him, no to eternal life, and no to treasures in heaven. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem and the cross; he would not have another chance to talk with Him. But perhaps the destruction of Jerusalem some 40 years later would have caused him to rethink what he had been offered.

5. Why did Jesus say it was humanly impossible for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God?

It must be because it's true. That points to our all being fallen, that even the "good and sincere" people, like that young ruler cannot bridge the gap between their own nature and the holiness of God. Psalm 53: 3 says there is no one righteous, not even one. Romans 3 echoes that.

6. Jesus' disciples had given up their jobs and their lives - and would give up their physical lives for Him as well. Why were they able to do this?

As they followed Him, they developed enough faith in Jesus' character and teaching and miracles to believe in Him. But they still all ran away after Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane - so their faith wasn't that strong. So it must have been Jesus' prayers for them that kept them. When they received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they were greatly strengthened. They also had fellowship with each other - they stayed together after Jesus' arrest and crucifixion.

7. Psalm 51:16,17 says, "You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God" (NLT). Did the disciples - the men who did choose to follow Jesus - have a broken spirit and a repentant heart?

Yes, to some degree. We see this when Jesus first called His disciples, in Luke 5. Jesus is teaching a crowd from Simon's fishing boat, then tells Simon

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2.2 Who Can Enter Heaven?

to put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch. Peter said they'd worked hard all the night before and had not caught any fish but would let down the nets for Jesus. When they did so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. When Peter saw this, he realized who Jesus is and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" When Paul was on the road to Damascus to arrest and imprison the Christians there, he was sure that his own ways were superior and therefore it was right for him to triumph over the Christians. Acts 9:1 says "Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples." But Jesus literally brought Saul to the ground when He spoke to him on that road (Acts 9:4) In Philippians 3 Paul says of his prior confidence in himself, "I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ..." (Phil. 3:: 8-9).

But the disciples still showed spiritual pride and an attitude of triumphalism at times, so they weren't completely broken in spirit and repentant - Jesus continued to work on this in them throughout their lives (as He does with us).

The Most Important Commandment

Mark 12:28-34

Before you read:

1. What are some of the rules that you follow in your life?
2. Why do you think you should follow them?

Encourage a few students to share their thoughts and what influenced their concepts of the afterlife. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is to focus on the lesson topic and consider what we recognize as authority for truth.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Change these False statements to make them True:

1. God gave the Law of Moses to the people to help them live in peace.
2. The Pharisees thought they knew God's Law better than Jesus did.
3. The Pharisees thought the law God gave to Moses was not enough for the people, so they added more rules.
4. Jesus did not expect people to follow the rules of the Pharisees. (But He did expect them to obey God.)
5. Jesus said those who loved Him would obey his teaching.
6. The Pharisees did not listen to what Jesus had to say.
7. Jesus said the teacher of the law was not far from the kingdom of God.

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| __d__1. amendment | a. feeling truly sorry for a bad action |
| __f__2. commandment | b. to challenge |
| __g__3. opponent | c. reveal |

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds
2.3 The Most Important Commandment

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| ___e___4. debating | d. a change |
| ___b___5. dare | e. arguing |
| ___a___6. repentance | f. a rule to be obeyed |
| ___c___7. unmask | g. one who disagrees and wants to stop someone |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. According to Jesus, the most important ___commandment___ was to love God.
2. The Pharisees made ___amendments___ and additions to the Law of Moses.
3. No one ___dared___ ask Jesus more questions.
4. Jesus was an ___opponent___ of the Pharisees' extra rules.
5. Jesus had finished ___debating___ the Pharisees when the teacher of the law asked him about the greatest commandment.
6. If someone pays back money that she stole, she shows ___repentance___.
7. The Pharisees wanted to ___unmask___ Jesus as a false teacher.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. What is the name for the commandments God wrote on stone to give to Moses?
The Ten Commandments.
2. What did Jesus say was the greatest commandment?
To love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbour as yourself. These were quotes from the Old Testament.
3. How can people show love for God?
They can try to know His Word, and then do what pleases Him, keeping Him as the focus of their minds, hearts and actions. (Answers may vary)
4. What does it mean to love others like we love ourselves?
Treat other people the way we would want to be treated.
5. What does the gospel of John say about love and obedience?

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds

2.3 The Most Important Commandment

Obedience to God reveals our love for God. And God loves those who love Him and want to obey.

6. How would love make obeying God's law easier?
When we love God, we want to please Him. When we love others, we want to do what is best for them.
7. Why did the Pharisees try to trick Jesus?
They thought he was teaching wrongly, and he did not accept their authority, so they wanted to shame him in front of the crowd.
8. Why do you think the people were afraid to ask Jesus more questions?
His answers revealed their own hearts and the religious leaders realized they couldn't trick him.

- *Intermediate*

1. Why do you think God gave the commandments to Moses?
To give them a guideline as to how to relate to each other and to Him. To establish a good and stable life and to establish a culture that would be of His making and different from the cultures around them.
2. When you look at Jesus's choice of the greatest commandments, what do you realize is important to God?
Putting God first and caring for others: truth and justice.
3. Who were the Pharisees and why did they seek to add to the rules that God gave them?
They wanted to be perfect in following God. Less pure motives: they wanted to be respected and noticed as holy men.
4. David wrote in Psalm 119: 1 - 4,
*"Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD.
Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart—
they do no wrong but follow his ways.
You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed."*
What do you notice in that passage about the kind of obedience God expects?
They were to be fully obeyed.

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds
2.3 The Most Important Commandment

5. What is the connection between love and obedience expressed in the passage from the gospel of John?
Love and obedience go hand in hand. Obedience to God reveals our love for God. And God loves those who love Him and want to obey.
6. What was the real purpose behind the Pharisees' intense questioning of Jesus?
They wanted to find fault, so they could use it against him.
7. Is it easy to love God with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself? Do you want to do this all the time?
No, this is harder than we can do, or even want to do. It would involve self-sacrifice and a love beyond our ability.
8. Why do you think the people were afraid to ask Jesus more questions?
They realized they couldn't trick him. His answers revealed their own hearts.

- *Challenging*

1. When you look at the 'most important' commandment what do you realize is important to God?
Putting God first and caring for others: truth and justice.
2. What purpose did the Pharisees have by adding more rules to the commandments God already gave them?
They wanted to be perfect in following God. Less pure motives: they wanted to be respected and noticed as holy men.
3. David wrote in Psalm 119: 1 - 4,
*"Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD.
Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart—
they do no wrong but follow his ways.
You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed."*
4. What did David say about God's precepts? What are some key thoughts that David expresses in this passage?
They were to be fully obeyed. Those who keep his statutes AND seek him with all their hearts would be blessed.

Chapter Two: Speaking to the Crowds
2.3 The Most Important Commandment

5. What is the connection between love and obedience expressed in the passage from the gospel of John?

Love and obedience go hand in hand. Obedience to God reveals our love for God. And God loves those who love Him and want to obey.

6. What was the real purpose behind the Pharisees' intense questioning of Jesus?

They wanted to find fault, so they could use it against him.

7. Is it easy to love God with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself? Do you want to do this all the time? How did these Old Testament commandments point to Jesus?

No, this is harder than we can do, or even want to do. It would involve self-sacrifice and a love beyond our ability. Therefore, we need forgiveness for this and the grace to still be acceptable to God - both of these Jesus came to offer us.

8. Why do you think the people were afraid to ask Jesus more questions?

They realized they couldn't trick him. His answers revealed their own hearts. They were too afraid to have their shortcomings revealed further. As Paul said in Romans 3 :20, "*Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.*"

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities
3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

Breaking the Sabbath Rules

Mark 2:23-27; 3:1-6

Before you read:

1. How do you rest?
2. When do you rest?

Encourage a few students to share their thoughts. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is to focus on what rest is and the purpose of the 4th commandment.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. Keeping the Sabbath was one of the Ten Commandments. T
2. Servants still worked on the Sabbath. F
3. The Scriptures said you could not carry anything heavier than a dried fig on the Sabbath. F
4. Abiathar the priest had allowed King David and his men to eat the sacred bread when they were hungry. T
5. The Pharisees cared about the man with the deformed hand. F
6. The Scriptures said you could not heal anyone on the Sabbath. F

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| <u> a </u> 1. fig | a. a small fruit |
| <u> c </u> 2. Son of Man | b. a thing one does |
| <u> f </u> 3. accuse | c. a title from prophecy (about a future King who would rule the earth forever- Daniel 7: 13) |
| <u> b </u> 4. deed | d. very holy; especially used for God |

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

__h__5. harvest	e. returned to good condition
__d__6. sacred	f. blame
__e__7. restored	g. not having the normal shape or form
__g__8. deformed	h. to gather a crop

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. The Pharisees wanted to __accuse__ Jesus of breaking the law.
2. When grain is ripe, the farmers will ____harvest__ it.
3. The Pharisees added many rules to the Sabbath such as not carrying anything heavier than a dried ____fig__ .
4. Jesus called himself by the title of __Son of Man__.
5. When Jesus __restored__ the man's __deformed__ hand, it was a very good __deed__ .
6. God's Temple was a __sacred__ place.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. As Jesus and His disciples walked through the grain fields, his disciples were breaking off some of the heads of grains to eat. (This was allowed and common in Jewish society of the time.)
- B. Some Pharisees who saw this asked Jesus why he was letting His disciples harvest grain on the Sabbath - for they said it was forbidden to do work on the Sabbath.
- C. Jesus asked them if they had ever read the Scriptures where Abiathar the priest gave David and his men the sacred loaves of bread from the house of God - loaves that were supposed to only be given to the priests. (The house of God refers here to the Tabernacle (the tent that had been made in the time of Moses); the Temple had not yet been made at that time.)
- D. Jesus went into a Temple for the Sabbath day worship and saw a man there with a withered hand. The Pharisees were watching Jesus so that they could accuse Him of breaking the Law if He healed the man on the Sabbath.

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

- E. Jesus asked His critics if the Law permitted good deeds on the Sabbath - or was it a day for doing evil? He asked if the Sabbath was a day to save life or to destroy it. But the Pharisees wouldn't answer.
- F. Jesus told the man to hold out his hand and it was completely healed. The Pharisees were so furious they immediately went to supporters of the Roman ruler, Herod, to plot with them how to kill Jesus.

Discussion

Easier

1. What was the Sabbath?

It was the Jewish day of rest.

2. What did the Scriptures say about the Sabbath?

It was one of the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses. It said that the Israelites had to rest on that day.

3. Who had to rest on the Sabbath?

Everyone; men, women, children, servants, livestock, and foreigners.

4. What did Jesus say about himself, the Son of Man?

He said he is Lord, even over the Sabbath.

5. What law did King David break? Was the priest angry with David for breaking this law?

David and his men ate the bread that had been on display in the Tabernacle (this was the tent of worship that Moses had the Israelites make; the Temple wasn't built yet); this bread was only for the priests to eat. The priest was not angry with David; he gave them the bread. He knew feeding the hungry king and his men was more important than keeping this law.

6. What did Jesus say was the purpose of the Sabbath?

He said the Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people. He also said it was a day for doing good, and for saving a life.

7. Why were the Pharisees angry with Jesus for healing the man with the deformed hand?

They deemed healing as work that was forbidden on the Sabbath.

8. Why was Jesus angry with the Pharisees?

He was angry (and sad) because they had "hard hearts." They cared more about their rules than they did for the deformed man.

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

9. What did Jesus ask the Pharisees before he healed the man?

He asked them if the law permits good deeds on the Sabbath, and whether it was a day to save a life or destroy it.

10. What did the Pharisees do after Jesus healed the man?

They immediately went away and met with the supporters of Herod to plot how to kill Jesus.

Intermediate

1. What did the Scriptures say about the Sabbath? What did the Pharisees add to this?

The Sabbath was one of the ten commandments. It said that the Israelites were not to work on the Sabbath, and this applied to everyone whether they were adults or children or servants; even the animals had to rest. The Pharisees wrote volumes of definitions of "work". You couldn't carry anything heavier than a dried fig; you couldn't write more than two letters of the alphabet; some thought you shouldn't lift a child; a tailor couldn't have a needle in his robe. And you couldn't heal, and you couldn't eat a handful of grain that still had the husk on it.

2. Why do you think Jesus reminded the Pharisees about the story of King David?

They honoured King David - yet King David broke the rules about eating the sacred loaves of bread. The priest, who knew the rules, was the one who gave this bread to David and his men. The priest did this because of who David was. So the priest knew that the welfare of David was greater than the law of the bread. And Jesus was greater than David.

3. What did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of when he was crossing the grain fields? When he healed the man with the withered hand?

They accused him of allowing his disciples to break the Sabbath by harvesting grain when they were crossing the grain fields. They accused him of healing on the Sabbath, which was breaking the Sabbath by doing work.

4. In Mathew 11 Jesus says, "Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

a) What is Jesus teaching about rest?

He said that his rest was for their souls, and it would relieve them of weariness and heavy burdens. He said his burden was light.

b) Is a humble and gentle heart valued in your society?

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

Answers will vary here. But our society values a heart that is unbowed, unyielding, and in control.

5. The Old Testament prophet Hosea spoke these words from God, "I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me more than I want burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6).

a) Which is easier to know God or to offer sacrifices?

Answers will vary, but it is easy to offer a sacrifice - you could offer something as small as some grain and oil at that time. To know God required much time, struggle, determination and commitment.

b) In today's passage, how does Jesus show that He is God incarnate?

Jesus has the same heart as God. The Pharisees in this passage missed out completely on God's heart. His teachings aligned completely with that of Hosea.

6. Earlier in Mark chapter two, Jesus said, "...who would patch old clothing with new cloth? For the new patch would shrink and rip away from the old cloth, leaving an even bigger tear than before. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the wine would burst the wineskins and the wine and the skins would both be lost. New wine calls for new wineskins" (Mark 2:21,22).

a) Who is Jesus referring to as the old cloth, and the old wine skins?

The old cloth and the old wine skins are the teachings of the Pharisees, and the following of the Mosaic laws.

b) What is Jesus changing about how we relate to God? To each other?

Jesus is bringing in the New Covenant in which we are to serve God not by being subject to the letter of a law but being transformed by God's rule of our heart and mind. We are to relate to each other not according to outward laws, but according to a transformed heart.

c) Why do you think Jesus didn't try to work with the Pharisees and gently show them a better way?

Jesus said that if you tried to pour new wine into old wineskins, the wineskins would break, and the wine lost. The Pharisees were completely unwilling to accept Jesus; they wanted His death, not change. Jesus had three years of public ministry and a lot of people who were waiting for His salvation; He did not waste that time. He had taught His disciples that if someone would not receive them, to shake their dust off their feet and move on to someone who would (Matt. 10:14).

Challenging

1. What did the Scriptures say about the Sabbath? How did the Pharisees embellish this?

The Sabbath was one of the Ten Commandments. It said that the Israelites were not to work on the Sabbath, and this applied to everyone whether they were adults or children or servants; even the animals had to rest. The Pharisees wrote volumes of definitions of "work". You couldn't carry anything heavier than a dried fig; you couldn't write more than two letters of the alphabet; some thought you shouldn't lift a child; a tailor couldn't have a needle in his robe. And you couldn't heal, and you couldn't eat a handful of grain that still had the husk on it.

2. What did Jesus say was God's intention for the Sabbath?

He said that the Sabbath was intended to meet the needs of men. He said it was a day to do good, and a day to save lives.

3. Why do you think Jesus reminded the Pharisees of the story of King David?

They honoured King David - yet King David broke the rules about eating the sacred loaves of bread. The priest, who knew the rules, was the one who gave this bread to David and his men. The priest did this because of who David was. So the priest knew that the welfare of David was greater than the law of the bread. And Jesus was greater than David.

4. Why did Jesus call himself the Son of Man and say he was Lord of the Sabbath?

Jesus was the Messiah, the one prophesied by Daniel as the one 'like a Son of Man' who would be the Eternal King. As Lord of the Sabbath, he was claiming higher authority than the Pharisees who had distorted Scripture.

5. Why did the Pharisees try to find Jesus guilty of breaking the law?

They wanted to discredit him in the eyes of the people. And they wanted to exert control over him and his teachings. They wanted to rule in his place.

6. The Old Testament prophet Hosea spoke these words from God, "I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me more than I want burnt offerings." (Hosea 6:6)

- a. How do these stories show that Jesus had the same heart and mind as God?

Jesus said the Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people - and so in his eyes the disciples were meeting legitimate need of hunger

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

when they ate some grain from the field. In this Jesus put their need above the law of the Sabbath - and told the Pharisees that they misunderstood the law of the Sabbath. Jesus healed the man with the deformed hand - this was an act of love. He said the Sabbath was a day to save life, and the law permits good deeds on the Sabbath. These teachings align with that of Hosea; the Pharisees' teaching did not.

- b. How far were the Pharisees from knowing God? How is it that you can think that you are serving God, yet you don't even know Him?

Jesus said the Pharisees did deeds to be noticed by men; they blocked the entrance to the Kingdom of heaven by putting their own rule above that of God; they taught the people incorrect relationship to God; they said it was okay to lie if you swore by the Temple, but not okay to lie if you swore by the gold in the Temple - because they said that the gold was more valuable than the Temple; they neglected important things like justice and mercy, but were scrupulous about tithing spices; they were hypocrites; and they rejected the prophets (Matthew 23).

Why do people do this? Perhaps it's because they love being a religious leader; they seek the applause of the crowd; they love being religious, but they don't particularly love God; or they don't know that they don't know him.

7. Earlier in Mark chapter two, Jesus said, "...who would patch old clothing with new cloth? For the new patch would shrink and rip away from the old cloth, leaving an even bigger tear than before. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the wine would burst the wineskins and the wine and the skins would both be lost. New wine calls for new wineskins" (Mark 2:21,22).

- a. Who is Jesus referring to as the old cloth, and the old wine skins? And what is he referring to as the new cloth and the new wine?

The old cloth and the old wine skins are the teachings of the Pharisees, and the following of the Mosaic laws. The new cloth and the new wine are the New Covenant. In the Bible, the initiation of covenants was always sealed with the sprinkling of blood. Hebrews 12:24 says that Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant and that his sprinkled blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

- b. Why does Jesus have the right to bring in new wine? New cloth?

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and he is Lord over all. He is God incarnate. He created the Sabbath and the Mosaic law, and he has the right to change it.

- c. Why do you think Jesus confronted the Pharisees rather than try to persuade them and build bridges to them?

He knew what was in their hearts and minds. He knew that the Pharisees were too hard-hearted to listen to him or to accept his teachings. He did build bridges with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in Sychar; he was polite and compassionate when talking with her - but he did not compromise what he was saying about himself.

8. In Galatians 2:21 Paul says, "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing." In Acts 15:11, Peter said, "We believe that we (Jew and Gentile) are all saved the same way, by the undeserved grace of the Lord Jesus." Paul dealt harshly with the Judaizers who taught that one should still live according to Mosaic laws and Jewish customs. In what way is Paul showing the same heart and mind of Jesus as shown in this story?

Jesus had rebuked the Pharisees for their legalism, and Paul rebuked the Judaizers for the same.

When Jesus healed the man with the deformed hand, the Pharisees immediately went to the Herodians to plot Jesus' death. In the Pharisees' eyes, Jesus did die for nothing.

The Judaizers wanted to retain righteousness from the law - with Jesus the Messiah as an addition. The Pharisees were not willing to accept Jesus' teachings on the New Covenant replacing the Mosaic Law. Paul, like Jesus, saw that they wanted to retain their false spirit of religiosity and reject the doctrine of Grace. Since the law cannot save, then Jesus would have died for nothing.

9. Jesus claimed to be the source of true 'rest', saying "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).
 - a. What heavy burdens do people carry?

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.1 Breaking the Sabbath Rules

Answers will vary. Some examples: guilt and shame for sin, trying to control one's life and the lives of others', consequences of wrong choices, fear of death, etc.

b. How can Jesus give rest for our souls?

It was the custom to yoke a young animal to an experienced animal when plowing the fields. This is the metaphor Jesus is using. If we are yoked to Him, He teaches us the way to go and comforts us as we walk in step with Him.

Not Following Tradition

Mark 7:1-23

Before you read:

1. Can you think of any cultural tradition that may be good?
2. Can you think of any cultural tradition that may be bad?

Encourage a few students to share their thoughts. (You may give examples from Canadian culture.) Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is that cultural traditions are not the same as God's Law. The Gospel is above culture, and it changes culture, just as it changes individuals.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Put the story events in order from first to last:

- a. ___6___ Jesus told the religious leaders exactly how they were disobeying God's Law by adding their own traditions.
- b. ___2___ The Pharisees saw Jesus' disciples eating with unwashed hands.
- c. ___3___ The religious leaders asked Jesus why his disciples ate with defiled hands.
- d. ___7___ Jesus told the people that what they ate could not defile them.
- e. ___5___ Jesus quoted Isaiah's prophecy that people would speak well of God, but not care about Him in their hearts.
- f. ___1___ The Pharisees kept many traditions about ceremonial washing.
- g. ___4___ Jesus called the religious leaders hypocrites.
- h. ___8___ Jesus said defilement comes from inside a person's heart.

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.2 Not Following Tradition

__e__1. corruption	a. people who tell you to do something because it is right but don't do it themselves
__g__2. ceremonial	b. rude, dirty talk or actions
__h__3. morals	c. hate
__a__4. hypocrites	d. to make it nothing
__f__5. in vain	e. evil change; rotten
__d__6. nullify	f. useless; without purpose; waste of time
__c__7. malice	g. a way to do something for symbolic or religious purposes
__b__8. lewdness	h. beliefs in what is right and wrong

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. According to Jesus, the Pharisees __nullified__ the word of God.
2. Jesus called the Pharisees __hypocrites__.
3. True defilement is __corruption__ inside a person's heart.
4. Hands were washed for __ceremonial__ purposes.
5. Throwing hot coffee on someone shows __malice__.
6. He always swears and tells disgusting jokes. No one likes his __lewdness__.
7. We all respect his good __morals__, so we often ask for his advice.
8. Isaiah said the people worshipped God __in vain__.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. What is the name of the Law that the Jewish people follow?
The Law of Moses.
2. Who were the Pharisees?
They were a group of very religious people who followed many strict traditional rules.
3. What is an example of defilement according the Pharisees?

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.2 Not Following Tradition

Not washing after going to the marketplace, eating unclean food, eating with foreigners, not washing eating utensils properly, etc.

4. **Why were the Pharisees angry with Jesus' disciples?**

His disciples hadn't followed custom by washing their hands before they ate.

5. **Why did Jesus call them hypocrites?**

They pretended to be religious, but their hearts were far from God. (They cared about their rules, but not about people or what really pleased God.)

6. **What did Jesus say was important to God?**

A person's heart was more important than their obedience to man-made rules.

7. **What really causes people to be defiled?**

The evil that comes out of their hearts: evil thoughts, talk and actions.

8. **How important do you think this teaching is?**

(Answers vary.)

- *Intermediate*

1. **What did the Jewish people follow in addition to the Law of Moses?**

The traditions of the rabbis.

2. **What does defilement mean?**

It means the state of corruption of one's morals, impurity of principles, character, or pollution by sin. To be defiled is basically to be against God.

3. **Who were the Pharisees?**

The Pharisees were religious people noted for their very strict observance of the traditional and written law.

4. **Why were the Pharisees angry with Jesus' disciples?**

His disciples hadn't followed custom by washing their hands before they ate.

5. **What did Jesus say to correct them? What does this way of speaking reveal about Jesus?**

He quoted Isaiah and then said: "*You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.*" This comment shows Jesus' authority on Scripture as well as His understanding of God's heart.

6. **How does Jesus reveal the Pharisees' hypocrisy? What is wrong with the Pharisee's traditions?**

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.2 Not Following Tradition

They were strict about following the 'letter' of the rules but disobeyed the purpose of the rules.

7. What is Jesus' definition of defilement? How does Jesus' definition change the way people might behave?

It wasn't the exterior things that defiled a man but his heart and mouth. Stop following tradition and learn to obey God.

- *Challenging*

1. What did the Jewish people follow in addition to the Law of Moses?

The traditions of the rabbis.

2. What does defilement mean?

It means the state of corruption of one's morals, impurity of principles, character, or pollution by sin. To be defiled is basically to be against God.

3. Who were the Pharisees?

The Pharisees were religious people noted for their very strict observance of the traditional and written law.

4. It was the teaching of the rabbis that it was a greater offence for someone to speak against them than it was for someone to speak against the Bible. What is the danger in this thinking?

Answers will vary here. The rabbis would have started off trying to find practical ways of applying the Mosaic Laws to everyday life. But Scripture is God-breathed, their rules are man-made. So they ended up putting themselves in God's position and took His authority with the people. And so they devalued God Himself to less than themselves. This devaluation of God is seen in their devaluation of Jesus. They wanted Jesus dead.

5. Why were the Pharisees angry with Jesus' disciples according to the story? What do you think was the true cause of their anger?

His disciples hadn't followed custom by washing their hands before they ate. Jesus wasn't playing by their rules.

6. What did Jesus say to correct them? What did he quote to support what he said? What does this way of speaking reveal about Jesus?

He quoted Isaiah and then said: "You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions." This comment shows Jesus' authority on Scripture as well as His understanding of God's heart.

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.2 Not Following Tradition

7. How does Jesus reveal the Pharisees' hypocrisy? What is wrong with the Pharisee's traditions?

They were strict about following the 'letter' of the rules but disobeyed the purpose of the rules.

8. What is Jesus' definition of defilement? How does Jesus' definition change the way people might behave?

It wasn't the exterior things that defiled a man but his heart and mouth. Stop following tradition and learn to obey God.

Speaking the Truth Boldly

Mark 11:27-33; 12:1-12

Before you read:

1. Have you ever told someone the truth, but they did not want to hear it?
2. If so, what happened?

Encourage a few students to share their thoughts. Keep it brief and steer them back to the topic, if they get sidetracked. The point of this is to have them consider Jesus' courage and boldness in speaking truth to power.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Match the following metaphors with their meanings, in Jesus' story about the vineyard:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| __c__1. the vineyard | a. God |
| __a__2. the owner | b. Jesus |
| __d__3. the farmers | c. people of Israel |
| __d__4. the servants | d. the religious leaders |
| __b__5. the son | e. the prophets |

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| __f__1. repent | a. the source of something that was created |
| __d__2. defy | b. to allow someone to use something for a period of time in return for a payment |
| __a__3. origin | c. a stone with perfect angles at the corner of a building that guides where to put other stones for straight walls. |
| __h__4. baptize | d. refuse to obey |

Chapter Three: Challenging the Authorities

3.3 Speaking the Truth Boldly

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ___b___5. lease | e. a person who has the legal right to receive the property of someone who dies |
| ___g___6. criticize | f. be sorry for bad actions and want to change |
| ___e___7. heir | g. tell what is wrong |
| ___c___8. cornerstone | h. go through water to show a change of heart |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. The owners' son was the ___heir___ who would inherit the vineyard.
2. The tenant farmers agreed to ___lease___ the land from the owner.
3. Jesus ___criticized___ the teachings of the Pharisees, and he ___defied___ their authority. (These words could be reversed in order.)
4. Jesus quoted prophecy when he said, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the ___cornerstone___."
5. The Pharisees refused to say what the ___origin___ of John's teaching was.
6. John the Baptist told the people they must ___repent___ and be ___baptized___ to show a changed heart.

Re-tell the Story

Using the pictures, try to have the group re-tell each story of healing, with volunteers giving only one sentence at a time until the story is complete.

- A. A man built a vineyard. He put a wall around it, he made a grape press. He built a lookout tower.
- B. When he was done, the man leased the vineyard to tenant farmers and moved to another country.
- C. When harvest time came, the man sent a servant to his vineyard to collect his share of the crop.
- D. The tenants who leased the vineyard beat up the servant and wouldn't give him any of the crop.
- E. The owner sent a second servant, but he too was beaten. Then the owner sent his son.
- F. The tenants who leased the vineyard killed the son. They thought that now the vineyard would become their own.

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It's not shown in these illustrations, but Jesus then asked the Pharisees what they thought the owner of the vineyard would do. He told them that the owner would kill the tenants and lease the vineyard to others.

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. Why did the religious leaders refuse to say whether John's baptism was from heaven or of human origin?

If they said what they believed - that John's baptism was his own idea - then the people would be angry with them. If they said what the people believed - that John's baptism was God's idea - then they would be held accountable for not believing John.

2. How did the owner prepare the vineyard before he leased it?

He planted the vines, built a wall around the vineyard, dug a pit for pressing the grapes, and built a lookout tower.

3. What was the job of the tenant farmers?

They were to maintain what the owner had built, i.e. take care of the vineyard, maintain the wall around it so that animals didn't get in and damage the vines, and press the grapes.

4. What should the owner receive from the farmers?

The owner would receive his share of the grapes, or his share of the wine.

5. What should the tenant farmers receive?

They receive shares of the crop. (But they wanted more than that.)

6. What did the tenant farmers do the owner's servants? To his son?

The tenant farmers beat up the servants, and they killed the son.

7. Why did the religious teachers want to arrest Jesus?

He spoke this parable of the vineyard against them, for he was referring to them as the evil tenant farmers.

8. In that time, a cornerstone was the first stone set in the construction of a building. All the other stones would be put in place according to the position of the cornerstone.

- a) What building do you think Jesus is talking about here?

Here He is talking about people of Israel. God had built them into a nation to show what He is like to the world.

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b) How is Jesus the cornerstone in the prophecy?

He is the stone that was rejected by the builders - yet was the one that God made His cornerstone - a sure foundation - for God's salvation and His church. With Christ as our cornerstone, His perfect dimensions determine ours as living stones in His Church.

• *Intermediate*

1. Why did the religious leaders refuse to say whether John's baptism was from heaven or of human origin? What was Jesus' response to this?

If they said what they believed - that John's baptism was his own idea - then the people would be angry with them. If they said what the people believed - that John's baptism was God's idea - then they would be held accountable for not believing John. Jesus said that since they would not answer Him, then He would not answer them.

2. Do you think the religious leaders wanted Jesus to consult them and ask their permission before healing the sick, etc.?

They wanted Him to show what they considered to be "proper" respect for their traditions. Since the origin of their traditions were their own ideas, not Scripture, they did in effect want Jesus to honour them. Since Jesus is their God incarnate, they were placing God under themselves.

3. In Jesus' story about the vineyard,

- a. What represents Israel?

The vineyard. Israel was often symbolized as a vineyard in the Old Testament (e.g. Isaiah 5).

- b. Who represents God?

The owner. It is God who chose Abraham, and who wrote the Scriptures through men moved by His Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21)

- c. Who represents the religious teachers of Israel?

The tenant farmers. (They are symbolized as such in Isaiah 5.)

- d. Who represents the prophets?

The messengers sent by the owner. The prophets are called God's messengers (2 Chronicles 36:16).

- e. Who represents Jesus?

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The son of the owner.

4. In that time, a cornerstone was the first stone set in the construction of a building. All the other stones would be put in place according to the position of the cornerstone. Jesus was referring to Isaiah 28:16-17: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line."
 - a) What building do you think Jesus is talking about here?
Here He is talking about people of Israel. God had built them into a nation to show what He is like to the world.
 - b) Why is Jesus the cornerstone?
He is the stone that the builders rejected. And He is the one chosen by God to be the sure foundation for God's salvation.
5. Why did the religious teachers want to arrest Jesus?
They realized that He was speaking against them, for they recognized that the evil farmers in the parable were a metaphor for themselves. (See Question 9.)
6. When Jesus told the story of the Vineyard, he was actually using the imagery from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 5). In that chapter Isaiah said that Israel was God's vineyard that God had planted, but His people failed to give Him good grapes. Isaiah said that because of this, God would bring the Babylonians to tear down the Temple, destroy Jerusalem, and exile the people of Judah to Babylon.
What warning was Jesus giving the religious leaders?
Jesus was warning them that Jerusalem and the Temple would yet again be destroyed, and they would again go into exile. In 70 A.D., following the Jewish rebellion led by the Zealots against Rome, the Roman army under General Titus burned down the Temple and tore it apart stone by stone. (Nero was Roman Emperor at the time.) By the time the battle was over, hundreds of thousands of Jews had died of starvation, been killed, or sold into slavery. In 135 A.D., following the Jewish rebellion led by Bar Kochba, the Romans literally ploughed Jerusalem, banned all Jews from entering it, and again hundreds of thousands of Jews died, or were killed, or sold as slaves throughout the Roman Empire. The Romans then renamed Judea as Palestine to try to remove the memory of Judea from history. (Hadrian was Roman Emperor at the time.)
7. Do all Christians accept Jesus' authority in their life? Why or why not?

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3.3 Speaking the Truth Boldly

No. This is partly because we don't know Him well enough to trust Him fully. As the Jews of their day trusted the Pharisees, we tend to trust the prevailing ethics of our time over what Jesus had to say. For example, we say that all roads lead to God, as if His death on the cross was a sincere but misguided gesture. And, like the Pharisees, many Christian leaders respect their own reasoning and that of their teachers, above what Scripture says.

- *Challenging*

1. Why did the religious leaders refuse to say whether John's baptism was from heaven or of human origin? Why did the leaders fear the people?

If they said what they believed - that John's baptism was his own idea - then the people would be angry with them. If they said what the people believed - that John's baptism was God's idea - then they would be held accountable for not believing John. Jesus said that since they would not answer Him, then He would not answer them. They feared the people - as shown in their refusal to answer Jesus' question about the origin of John's baptism - because they were held in respect by the people as their teachers, and they did not want to lose that position.

2. Do you think the religious leaders wanted Jesus to consult them and ask their permission before healing the sick, etc.? Explain your answer.

They wanted Him to show what they considered to be "proper" respect for their traditions. Since the origin of their traditions were their own ideas, not Scripture, they did in effect want Jesus to honour them. Since Jesus is their God incarnate, they were placing God under themselves.

3. In Jesus' story about the vineyard,

- a. What represents Israel? Why is this a good metaphor?

The vineyard. Israel was often symbolized as a vineyard in the Old Testament (e.g. Isaiah 5 - see question 5).

- b. Who represents God? Why is this a good metaphor?

The owner. It is God who chose Abraham, and who wrote the Scriptures through men moved by His Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21)

- c. Who represents the religious teachers of Israel? Why is this a good metaphor?

The tenant farmers. They are symbolized as such in Isaiah 5 - see question 5.

- d. Who represents the prophets? Why is this a good metaphor?

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The messengers sent by the owner. The prophets are called *God's messengers* (2 Chronicles 36:16).

e. **Who represents Jesus? Why is this a good metaphor?**

The son of the owner. Jesus is the Son. The farmers wanted the vineyard for themselves. They did indeed kill the Son.

4. **It was the custom in Israel, that if someone farmed a land for three years, they could lay claim to that land, unless an owner showed up to counter that claim. What does this add to your understanding of the story?**

The farmers could indeed claim the vineyard as their own, if they could keep any messenger from the owner from showing up to dispute their claim. That's why they killed the messenger and the son and disposed of their bodies. They may have thought that the owner would not come himself to dispute the claim (perhaps because he would be afraid of them).

5. **When Jesus told the story of the Vineyard, he was using imagery from a passage by the Old Testament prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 5). In that chapter Isaiah said that Israel was God's vineyard that God had planted, but His people failed to give Him good grapes. Isaiah said that because of this, God would bring the Babylonians to tear down the Temple, destroy Jerusalem, and exile the people of Judah to Babylon.**

Why did Jesus use this passage?

Jesus was warning them that Jerusalem and the Temple would yet again be destroyed, and they would again go into exile. In 70 A.D., following the Jewish rebellion led by the Zealots against Rome, the Roman army under General Titus burned down the Temple and tore it apart stone by stone. (Nero was Roman Emperor at the time.) By the time the battle was over, hundreds of thousands of Jews had died of starvation, been killed, or sold into slavery. In 135 A.D., following the Jewish rebellion led by Bar Kochba, the Romans literally ploughed Jerusalem, banned all Jews from entering it, and again hundreds of thousands of Jews died, or were killed, or sold as slaves throughout the Roman Empire. The Romans then renamed Judea as Palestine to try to remove the memory of Judea from history. (Hadrian was Roman Emperor at the time.)

6. **In that time, a cornerstone was the first stone set in the construction of a building. All the other stones would be put in place according to the position of the cornerstone. Jesus was referring to Isaiah 28:16-17: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who**

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trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line."

Why was it fitting for Jesus to seemingly randomly refer to a cornerstone?

He is the stone that the builders rejected. And He is the one chosen by God to be the sure foundation for God's salvation (and His church). He is reminding the religious leaders of this verse - they would know it. They would know that He was telling them yet again who He is, and who there were.

7. Do all Christians accept Jesus' authority in their life? Why or why not?

No. This is partly because we don't know Him well enough to trust Him fully. As the Jews of their day trusted the Pharisees, we tend to trust the prevailing ethics of our time over what Jesus had to say. For example, we say that all roads lead to God, as if His death on the cross was a sincere but misguided gesture. And, like the Pharisees, many Christian leaders respect their own reasoning and that of their teachers, above what Scripture says, even rejecting parts of the Bible that disagree with their teaching.

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy
4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

Voice of the Forerunner

Mark 1:1-11

Before you read:

1. Is it possible to know the future? If yes, how can we know?
Answers will vary. This will show you students' opinions of prophecy.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. John the Baptist said he was the Messiah. F
2. John the Baptist was the messenger that Isaiah spoke about. T
3. Only a few people were willing to be baptized by John. F
4. Only Jesus saw the Holy Spirit descend on him. F
5. John said the Messiah would baptize people with the Holy Spirit. T

Match the word with its meaning. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| <u>h</u> 1. refer to | a. not able to walk easily |
| <u>e</u> 2. baptize | b. come down |
| <u>g</u> 3. repent | c. feel doubt or offense |
| <u>b</u> 4. descend | d. partial darkness, or a feeling of sadness |
| <u>f</u> 5. exist | e. go through water to show a change of heart |
| <u>a</u> 6. lame | f. be; live |
| <u>i</u> 7. humble | g. be sorry for doing bad things; wanting to change |
| <u>c</u> 8. fall away | h. talk about |
| <u>d</u> 9. gloom | i. Those who know they are no better than others and who respect others |

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4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

Fill in the blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. God blesses those who do not ___fall away___ when Jesus does not do what they want him to do.
2. John preached that people should be ___baptized___ to show they had ___repented ___ of their sin.
3. My grandmother uses a cane because her left leg is ___lame ___.
4. Canada became a nation before I ___existed___.
5. That teacher is very ___humble___. He does not think he is too important to clean after class, and he ___refers to___ his students with respect.

Re-tell the Story

- A. Isaiah said the Messiah would heal the deaf, the blind, the lame, and the dumb. He said the humble and the poor would be filled with joy.
- B. John the Baptist was in the wilderness preaching that people should confess and repent of their sins and turn to God to be forgiven; and they should be baptized to show their commitment to this. Many people came out to John to be baptized in the Jordan river.
- C. John spoke of Jesus. He said that He was much greater than he, and would baptize the people with the Holy Spirit. When John saw Jesus he said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" and said that Jesus was the One he had been talking about.
- D. Jesus came to John to be baptized. When Jesus came out of the water, John saw the heavens split apart, saw the Holy Spirit descend on Jesus like a dove, and heard a voice from heaven saying, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy." (This is one place in Scripture where we see all members of the Trinity as separate persons yet one.)
- E. Because John spoke against Herod's sin with Herodias, Herod threw John in prison. Because John would not have been expecting that, he sent disciples to ask Jesus if He really was the Messiah. Jesus answered by pointing back to the words of Isaiah, saying the blind see, the lame walk, the sick are healed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor.

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4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. **Who was Isaiah?**

He was a prophet who wrote about the coming of the Messiah and the messenger of the Messiah.

2. **What did Isaiah say about 'the messenger's' job?**

He was to get the people prepared to meet and receive the Messiah.

3. **Who was the messenger?**

The messenger was John the Baptist.

4. **Who did John say Jesus was?**

John said that Jesus was so much greater that he (John) was not worthy to untie his sandals. He said that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He also said that Jesus existed long before him.

5. **Do you have any ideas about why John called Jesus 'The Lamb of God'?**

Answers will vary. Some students may know about the Passover lamb's blood on the doorposts or the Mosaic law of killing a lamb as a sin offering. Muslims should know the story of God providing a sheep as a substitute when Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son. Jesus' sacrifice was foreshadowed by all these events.

6. **What did John see when he baptized Jesus?**

John saw the heavens split apart, and the Holy Spirit descend on Jesus like a dove. John said that he heard a voice from heaven say that Jesus was His dearly loved Son, and that Jesus brought Him great joy.

7. **Why was John the Baptist put in prison?**

John was open in criticizing Herod's relationship with Herodias. They were likely angry to have their sin exposed in public, especially Herodias. They wanted to keep John quiet.

8. **Why do you think John asked Jesus if he was the Messiah?**

John was put into prison by the unrighteous ruler, Herod the Tetrarch. John had been expecting Jesus to set up the Kingdom of God. The prophet Isaiah had said there would be justice in this kingdom. But there was no justice for John.

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4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

9. **How did Jesus convince John that he was the Messiah?**

Jesus told John's disciples to tell him what they saw - the blind see; the lame walk; leprosy was healed; the deaf hear; the dead raised to life; and the Good News preached to the poor. Isaiah the prophet had said that the Messiah would do these things.

• *Intermediate*

1. **What is Isaiah's voice in the wilderness calling people to do?**

The voice is the voice of God. Through Isaiah, God tells the people of a messenger who will come and tell the people to deal with the sin in their hearts and minds and prepare to meet God. And then the glory of the Lord will be revealed.

2. **Why were people going out to see John?**

They were going out to repent of their sins, turn to God, and be forgiven. When they confessed their sins, they were baptized. In Acts 19:4, Paul says that John's baptism was one of repentance - a symbolic representation of recognizing their sins, and a desire for spiritual cleansing, and a vow to follow God's law in anticipation of the Messiah's arrival (Baptism of John the Baptist, gotQuestions.org.)

3. **How did John prepare the people to meet Jesus?**

John was preaching a message of the imminent coming of the Messiah, and their need to repent of their sins and prepare to meet Him. His baptism was symbolic of that decision in those who came to him.

4. **What did God allow John to know about Jesus?**

John knew that Jesus was greater than he was; that He would baptize with the Holy Spirit; that He was the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world; that He existed long before John (and remember that Elizabeth gave birth several months before Mary did); that the Holy Spirit was on Him; that He was God's dearly loved son; that He brought God great joy; that he healed the blind, the lame, the leprous, the deaf, and raised the dead to life; and that He preached Good News to the poor.

5. **Why was John in prison?**

John was saying that it was unlawful for Herod to take his stepbrother's wife and live with her as his own wife. Herod would listen to John, and probably would not have killed him; Herod sought to please the Jews. Herodias

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probably saw John as a threat to her reputation and her position as the wife of the tetrarch.

6. Isaiah had more to say about the Messiah's kingdom: "The scoffer will be gone, the arrogant will disappear, and those who plot evil will be killed. Those who convict the innocent by their false testimony will disappear. A similar fate awaits those who use trickery to pervert justice and who tell lies to destroy the innocent." (Is 29: 20 - 21) **How might this explain John's doubt about Jesus?**

John doubted that Jesus was the Messiah because He was not fulfilling all the prophecies that Isaiah gave about the Messiah. Isaiah's prophecies said that the Messiah would bring in the Kingdom. The prophecies about the Kingdom said there would be no arrogant or evil people, no perversion of justice since the innocent would be protected. John was innocent yet not protected - he was thrown into prison by those who were arrogant and plotted evil. Since Jesus was not fulfilling these prophecies, John doubted that He could be the Messiah.

Given the circumstances, it's not surprising that John doubted. And John would have wanted to protect the people he baptized from mistakenly thinking that Jesus was the Messiah, if He wasn't. John knew what the Messiah would do, but he misunderstood when Jesus would do this.

7. **What did Jesus do that proved that he was the Messiah?**

Jesus told John's disciples to tell John what they saw Jesus doing - healing the blind, the lame, those with leprosy, the deaf, raising the dead to life, and preaching the Good News to the poor. These things were direct fulfillments of Isaiah's prophecies about what the Messiah would do. No mere man could do these things. Further, these prophecies Jesus was quoting in Isaiah 29:18 and 19 are immediately followed in verses 20 and 21 by Isaiah's prophecies about the Kingdom being free of evil and arrogance and injustice. So, Jesus was also comforting John by giving him the message that He who fulfilled verses 18 and 19 would also fulfill verses 20 and 21 - but not then.

8. **If Jesus had set up his kingdom during his time on earth, what would this have meant for John? For the forgiveness of our sins?**

If the Kingdom of God had been brought in, then there would no longer be sickness, disability, injustice, arrogance, and evil. John would have been freed from prison, and the evil and arrogant Herod and Herodias dealt with. Since all those who were evil and arrogant would be no more, Jesus would not

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4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

have been sentenced to death on the cross. There would be no propitiation for our sins.

- **Challenging**

1. **What is Isaiah's voice in the wilderness calling people to do? What does this mean?**
The voice is the voice of God. God's command is used metaphorically in Isaiah. It tells Isaiah about the messenger who is to clear the way through the wilderness for the Lord, to make a straight highway for Him. To fill in the valleys, level the mountains and hills, straighten the curves and smooth out the rough places. This means that the people were to deal with the sin in their hearts and minds and prepare to meet God.
2. **Did everyone who went out to see John ask to be baptized by him? Why were people willing to be baptized?**
Not everyone; only those who responded to his message. These ones were willing to be baptized as an outward symbol of their inward repentance from their sins, desire for spiritual cleansing, and desire to be right with God.
3. **How did John prepare the people for Jesus?**
He told them that the Messiah was coming soon and that they were to prepare to meet him by acknowledging their sins, desiring to be spiritually cleansed, and desiring to commit their lives to serve God. His baptism was symbolic of those desires and commitment.
4. **What did you learn about Herod and Herodias?**
Herod was arrogant and selfish for he believed he had the right to take his stepbrother's wife for his own. He was also weak; he gave into his wife's demand to imprison John. Herodias was selfish and evil. She left her husband for Herod who offered her a greater position, and she sought the death of John for his righteous rebuking of this. Neither Herod nor Herodias feared God.
5. **Isaiah 29:20 had also prophesied about the Messiah's kingdom: "The scoffer will be gone, the arrogant will disappear, and those who plot evil will be killed. Those who convict the innocent by their false testimony will disappear." How might this explain John's doubt about Jesus?**
John doubted that Jesus was the Messiah because He was not fulfilling all the prophecies that Isaiah gave about the Messiah. Isaiah's prophecies said that the Messiah would bring in the Kingdom. The prophecies about the Kingdom said there would be no arrogant or evil people, no perversion of justice since the innocent would be protected. John was innocent yet not protected - he was thrown into

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4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

prison by those who were arrogant and plotted evil. Since Jesus was not fulfilling these prophecies, John doubted that He could be the Messiah.

Given the circumstances, it's not surprising that John doubted. And John would have wanted to protect the people he baptized from mistakenly thinking that Jesus was the Messiah, if He wasn't. John knew what the Messiah would do, but he misunderstood when Jesus would do this.

6. **Why might God have allowed these things to happen to John? Do you think that John was restored by Jesus' answer?**

Bible.org suggests that John's death marked a turning point in Jesus' ministry; that it ended Jesus' popularity with the crowds and helped bring in the successful opposition by the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin.

This was a big challenge not only to John's faith, but also to those who followed Jesus. They began to see that Jesus was requiring a much greater faith and commitment from his followers than they had realized. Those who came only for healings, interesting teachings, and free meals now turned away.

7. **Jesus' enemies acknowledged that he did all those things in Isaiah's prophecy. But they said that he was doing these things by the power of Satan. What is wrong with their argument?**

John 10:10 says that Satan comes only to kill, steal, and destroy. In Matthew 12:24-27, Jesus told the Pharisees that if demons brought healing and raised the dead then these demons would be fighting against Satan's purposes. Jesus was clearly fulfilling Messianic prophecies that the people should have been familiar with.

8. **If Jesus had set up his kingdom during his time on earth, what would this have meant for John? For the crowds? For his disciples? For the forgiveness of our sins?**

If the Kingdom of God had been brought in, then there would no longer be sickness, disability, injustice, arrogance, and evil.

John would have been freed from prison and the evil and arrogance Herod and Herodias dealt with. He would probably have received a key position in the Kingdom. The crowds would have no longer had to suffer from unrighteous people, would have been healed of all infirmities, and would have expected a continuation of free meals - all this without having to go through a change of heart. They would never have known what commitment meant and would not have understood the worth of their Messiah. They may have readily deserted Jesus for anyone who offered chips (French fries) to accompany the loaves and fishes.

The disciples would have had prominent positions in the Kingdom. They would not have had to face opposition in spreading the Gospel. They would have been receivers of easy belief-ism and would not have matured and become His workmanship.

Since all those who were evil and arrogant would be no more, Jesus would not have

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4.1 Voice of the Forerunner: John the Baptist

Entrance of the King

Mark 11: 1-33

Before you read:

1. Have you ever been surprised by something that turned out very differently than expected? What happened?
Answers will vary. The point of this is to get people thinking about how the ideas of the future are not always fulfilled according to expectations.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Change these False statements to be True:

1. Jesus did not know how to get a ride into the city of Jerusalem.
Jesus told his disciples exactly where and how to get a donkey colt.
2. When Jesus came to Jerusalem he made himself king.
Jesus did not make himself a political king. (But he did silently declare himself the king prophesied by Zechariah.)
3. Jesus entered Jerusalem on a beautiful white horse.
Jesus entered Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey.
4. Jesus was glad that the Temple marketplace was making money.
Jesus was angry that the Temple marketplace was cheating people, making it a 'den of thieves.'
5. Jews from Jerusalem were the only people in the city who were celebrating Passover.
Jews from all over the Roman empire were in the city to celebrate Passover.

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- f 1. ecstatic a. a piece of clothing
- d 2. marketplace b. a young male horse or donkey

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4.2 Entrance of the King

___b___3. colt	c. a group of people moving together in an orderly way
___a___4. garment	d. a market, a place where people sell various things
___c___5. procession	e. an animal that is killed as an offering to God
___g___6. exile	f. very happy or excited
___e___7. sacrifice	g. forced to leave home; not allowed to return

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. A lamb is the _____sacrifice_____ at the Passover celebration.
2. The people were _____ecstatic_____ when they thought Jesus would become their king. They threw their ___garments___ on the ground in front of him.
3. Jesus rode on a ___colt_____, a young male donkey.
4. Jesus did not want the people to use the Temple as a ___market___ where people were cheated.

Re-tell the story:

- A. Jesus sent two of his disciples into a village to get a young donkey that they would see as soon as they entered it. He told them that if anyone asked why they were taking it, to tell them that "The Lord needs it and will return it soon." The two disciples found the colt just as Jesus said, and told the bystanders what Jesus had said about it.
- B. The disciples brought the colt to Jesus and put their garments over it. Jesus rode on it into Jerusalem. The people in the crowds spread leafy branches on the road ahead of him for the donkey to ride on.
- C. The crowd was ecstatic, and were shouting praised to God, and blessings on the coming Kingdom of God (the Kingdom of our ancestor David).
- D. Jesus went into the Temple and looked at everything. He then returned to Bethany with the disciples.
- E. When Jesus returned the next day, he drove out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers, and stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace.
- F. Jesus quoted Jeremiah when he shouted, 'My Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves..."

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.2 Entrance of the King

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. **Why were there a lot of people in Jerusalem when Jesus came there?**
Jews gathered in Jerusalem from all over the Roman Empire to celebrate Passover. (It was one of the most important feasts on the Jewish calendar.)
2. **What did Jesus ride on when he came to Jerusalem?**
He rode on a colt, a young male donkey.
3. **What did the people do when Jesus came towards Jerusalem?**
They spread their garments and leafy branches on the road ahead of him, and they called out praises and blessings. They shouted out that Jesus was the Messiah, the awaited Son of David, and the one who would bring in the Kingdom.
4. **What did the prophet Zechariah say about the Messiah?**
Zechariah said that the Messiah would come to them riding on a donkey's colt. He also said the Messiah was their king, and that he would be righteous, victorious, and humble.
5. **Why do you think Jesus rode a donkey colt when he entered Jerusalem?**
Jesus was showing that He was the Messiah foretold by Zechariah. The crowds also understood this, and their words and actions showed their acceptance of Him as the 'Son of David' (Messiah) and King of Israel. However, Jesus did not go and ask to be crowned king. He first had to fulfill the Isaiah 53 prophecy, and be the 'Suffering Servant'.
6. **Why was Jesus angry with the money changers?**
They were charging unreasonably high prices to exchange their (Roman and Greek) coins for the (Tyrian) coins that they needed to pay the Temple tax with.
7. **What did Jeremiah say would happen to the Temple? To the Jews?**
He said that the Temple would be destroyed, and the people sent into exile. Jesus was saying the same thing indirectly by quoting Jeremiah. It had been fulfilled once when Babylon destroyed the Temple and took Judah into captivity. It would happen again when Rome destroyed the Temple of Herod and killed or sold off most of the Jews into slavery in 70 A.D.
8. **Why do you think Jesus was using Jeremiah's words?**

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.2 Entrance of the King

He was warning the people that if they refused to listen to God again, they would suffer the same way as in Jeremiah's time.

- *Intermediate*

1. **Why were there a lot of people in Jerusalem when Jesus came there?**

(It was the custom for the Jews to come to Jerusalem at least once in their life, and to attend, if possible, one of the main feasts there.) So there were thousands of Jews coming from all over the Roman Empire to celebrate the Passover feast. (Passover was one of the most important festivals on the Jewish calendar.)

2. **What were the people talking about before Jesus came to Jerusalem? Why did they talk about this?**

They were talking about how Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. Jesus had done this in the town of Bethany, which is close to Jerusalem, so the story had spread among all the people there. They thought that Jesus must be the Messiah and that since he was coming to Jerusalem at Passover, he must have chosen that time to declare himself the Messiah and bring in the Kingdom.

3. **What did Jesus ride on when he came to Jerusalem? Why was this important?**

Jesus rode on a donkey's colt. This fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah that the Messiah would come riding on a donkey's colt. It showed that Jesus was coming in peace - otherwise he would have ridden a warhorse (as he will when he returns.)

4. **What did the people do when Jesus came towards Jerusalem? Why did they do this?**

They spread their garments and leafy branches on the road ahead of him, and they called out praises and blessings. They shouted out that Jesus was the Messiah, the awaited Son of David, and the one who would bring in the Kingdom. They did this because they had heard how Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead; this was in Bethany, a nearby town. So, they thought he must be the Messiah and that he would choose Passover in Jerusalem as the time and place to declare himself and bring in the Kingdom.

5. **Why are the prophets important to this story?**

Jesus is fulfilling their prophecies about the Messiah, so the prophets are identifying him as the Messiah. This shows that God is the only one who knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10).

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.2 Entrance of the King

6. **Why was Jesus angry with the money changers, and with those who sold animals for sacrifice?**

They were charging exorbitant amounts to exchange the money, and for the price of the sacrificial animals. (The animals had to be approved by the priests, and those animals sold in the Temple were all pre-approved.)

7. **What do you think happened to the crowds who wanted to make Jesus king?**

They probably lost their faith in him when he didn't do as they expected. They expected him to make himself known as their Messiah. Instead, when he entered Jerusalem, he looked carefully around the Temple, then went back to Bethany. To make things worse, he drove out the money changers and the animals - something that upset the priests - and the priests were the leaders of the people.

- *Challenging*

1. **Why were there a lot of people in Jerusalem when Jesus came there?**

It was the Feast of Passover and Jews from all over the Roman Empire had come to celebrate it in Jerusalem, so thousands of people would come. [According to the Jewish understanding of Exodus 23:14-19, all male Jews were expected to come to Jerusalem for the three main feasts of Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Festival of Booths. Because of this, those three feasts were called Pilgrimage Festivals. In the time of the Greek and Roman Empires, the Jews would make a point of coming from all over the Mediterranean to Jerusalem.]

2. **What were the people talking about before Jesus entered Jerusalem? Why did they talk about this?**

They were talking about how Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. Jesus had done this in the town of Bethany, which is close to Jerusalem, so the story had spread among all the people there. They thought that Jesus must be the Messiah and that since he was coming to Jerusalem at Passover, he must have chosen that time to declare himself the Messiah and bring in the Kingdom.

3. **Why did the people think that Jesus was the Messiah, the King?**

He had raised Lazarus from the dead, and the people had heard how he was healing the lame, the blind, the leprosy, the deaf, the mute, and raising the dead. These things had been prophesied about the Messiah by Isaiah (Isaiah

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.2 Entrance of the King

29:18-21; 36:6). It was Passover, and the people thought that he was coming to Jerusalem to declare himself the Messiah on Passover.

4. **Why did Jesus choose to ride on a colt of a donkey, rather than on an adult donkey, or an impressive horse?**

Jesus chose to ride on a donkey's colt because this fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah that the Messiah would come riding on a donkey's colt. It showed that Jesus was coming in peace - otherwise he would have ridden a warhorse (as he will when he returns.) Mark said that this colt had never been ridden before (11:2); an adult donkey would be used to being ridden, but this colt would be expected to buck and kick the first time it was ridden. But it let Jesus ride it, showing that the donkey knew his Lord, even if the crowds didn't.

5. **How did the people respond when Jesus came towards Jerusalem? Why did they respond this way?**

They spread their garments and leafy branches on the road ahead of him, and they called out praises and blessings. They shouted out that Jesus was the Messiah, the awaited Son of David, and the one who would bring in the Kingdom. They did this because they had heard how Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead; this was in Bethany, a nearby town. So they thought he must be the Messiah and that he would choose Passover in Jerusalem as the time and place to declare himself and bring in the Kingdom.

6. **What was the importance of Zechariah and Daniel's prophecies?**

Zechariah said that the Messiah would come to them riding on a donkey's colt. He also said the Messiah was their king, and that he would be righteous, victorious, and humble. Daniel said he would come in this time period of Rome (Daniel said the Messiah would come in the time of the kingdom that followed the Greek Empire - and that was Rome). So, in this story, we see that Jesus fulfilled the Messianic prophecies of Zechariah, and Daniel; as well as Jeremiah. These were proofs that he was the Messiah.

7. **What do you think the people thought when Jesus did not make himself king when he entered Jerusalem? Why do you think that?**

When Jesus did not fulfill the crowd's expectations, they must have thought they were mistaken in thinking he was the Messiah. That could be why they so easily abandoned him when the Sanhedrin called on them to ask for the release of Barabbas, rather than Jesus, a few days later.

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.2 Entrance of the King

8. What was Jesus showing his disciples when he didn't declare himself king in Jerusalem?

He was telling them that their expectations of the Kingdom would not be fulfilled at that time. The disciples, like the crowds, expected that Jesus would declare himself Messiah and bring in the Kingdom. The disciples would have been more convinced of this than the crowds because they had witnessed his many miracles. [In Acts 1:6 we see the disciples asking Jesus, following his resurrection, if he was going to at that time restore the Kingdom to Israel then.] He was challenging their understanding of him.

9. Why was it wrong for the money changers and the people selling animals to charge high prices?

Most of the crowds did not have a lot of money, so the money changers and the vendors were harming their own people for financial gain. [The priests would only let the people sacrifice animals they had approved of, so the people could not shop around for a less expensive animal from an honest vendor outside of the Temple. The priests would only accept Tyrian coins, so the people had to exchange their Greek and Roman coins in order to pay the Temple tax.]

10. When Jeremiah gave his prophecy some 500 years before this, he was warning the Jews that Babylon would burn Solomon's Temple, and take the Jews away from Judah into exile in Babylon. Why, then, does Jesus quote Jeremiah here?

Jesus is warning them that the same thing was going to happen again. [In 70 A.D, the Romans burned the Temple and then tore it apart stone by stone. They massacred many Jews in Judea. In 130 A.D. the Romans massacred even more of the Jews of Judea and sent the survivors into exile (as slaves) throughout the Roman Empire.]

Last Supper of the Lamb

Mark 14:12-26

Before you read:

1. What do you know about the purpose of religious sacrifices? (Any religion)
Answers will vary. The point is to get students thinking about the purpose of sacrifices.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Match the parts of **Passover** with **Jesus' words and actions**.

<u>Passover</u>	<u>Jesus' Words & Actions</u>
1. <u>e</u> The Passover lamb must be without blemish.	a. "This is my blood...it is poured out as a sacrifice for many."
2. <u>a</u> The lamb is slaughtered	b. Jesus breaks the bread and gives it to his disciples to eat saying, "Take it, for this is my body".
3. <u>c</u> God tells his people to put the lamb's blood above and around the door posts.	c. Jesus says his blood "confirms the covenant between God and his people".
4. <u>b</u> People roast and eat the whole lamb.	d. Jesus told Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying."
5. <u>d</u> Death passes over the people who have believed God and put the lamb's blood around the door.	e. Jesus pleases God perfectly because he has no sin

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.3 Last Supper of the Lamb

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| __h__1. slaughter | a. no yeast |
| __e__2. shearer | b. fault |
| __b__3. blemish | c. spread something over a surface |
| __i__4. yeast | d. makes something sure |
| __a__5. unleavened | e. someone who cuts wool off an animal |
| __g__6. distressed | f. to give information about someone to their enemy |
| __d__7. confirms | g. very upset |
| __f__8. betray | h. to kill an animal for food |
| __c__9. smeared | i. ingredient that makes bread rise |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above

1. Every farm that sells wool needs a lot of ___ shearers ___ when the sheeps' coats are ready.
2. Jesus said that one of his twelve disciples would ___ betray ___ him, and this ___ distressed ___ all of them.
3. The Passover bread and wine had a new meaning when Jesus said his blood ___ confirmed ___ the covenant between God and his people.
4. Passover is also called the Feast of ___ Unleavened ___ Bread because no one can eat bread made with ___ yeast ___.
5. At the first Passover, the Israelites had to ___ slaughter ___ a lamb with no ___ blemish ___, and then ___ smear ___ the blood around the door.

Re-tell the Story using the pictures below

- A. Jesus sent two of his disciples into Jerusalem to prepare a place for them to have the Passover meal. He told them they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water, and to follow him. At the house the man entered, they

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4.3 Last Supper of the Lamb

were to ask the owner, "Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?"

- B. The guest room was a large room that was already set up.
- C. At the meal, Jesus told them that one of them would betray him. The disciples were distressed and each one asked, "Am I the one?" Jesus told them He must die in accordance with the Scriptures.
- D. Jesus took some bread and blessed it, then broke it into pieces and gave it to the disciples. He said, "Take it, for this is my body."
- E. Jesus took a cup of wine and gave thanks for it. He gave it to his disciples to drink from, and he told them "This is my blood which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many."
- F. After the dinner, they sang a hymn and then went out to the Mount of Olives to spend the night there.

Discussion

- *Easier*
 1. At Passover, where did the Israelites smear the blood of the lamb?
They smeared the blood on the sides and top of the doorframes of their houses.
 2. What did God do when he saw the blood of the lamb?
He passed over that house and did not kill their firstborn.
 3. What was special about the bread that the Jews had to eat for seven days after Passover?
It had no yeast (no leaven) in it.
 4. How do you think Jesus knew he was going to die?
He knew that he was the Messiah. He knew the Messiah had to die to take the punishment for sin. Also, he knew the future because he had all the knowledge of God.
 5. Who took the disciples to the upstairs room to prepare the Passover meal?
A man carrying a pitcher of water met them and took them to a house. The owner of the house took them to the large room that was set up for Passover.
 6. When Jesus told the disciples that one of them would betray him, what did the disciples ask?
They were very upset, and each one of them asked if it was they who would betray him.

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.3 Last Supper of the Lamb

7. Why do you think Jesus did not tell the disciples the location of the Passover supper beforehand?

Jesus' enemies were looking for a chance to arrest him. If Judas had known where the Passover supper was being celebrated, he may have given that location to the Sanhedrin. Then Jesus would not have been able to spend that Passover with his disciples, and to use the Passover to teach them about his sacrifice.

8. Jesus used bread and wine as **symbols** -objects that show an idea. What did the bread symbolize? What did the wine symbolize?

The bread symbolized Jesus' flesh that would be broken. The wine symbolized Jesus' blood that would be poured out. So, they symbolized his death to pay for their sins.

9. Why is the Passover Lamb a symbol of Jesus?

They are both sinless sacrifices. The lamb's blood protected the first born of the Israelites on the first night of Passover. The Lamb's blood protects us from spiritual death.

Also, every morning and evening, a lamb was sacrificed at the Temple in Jerusalem. This lamb was sacrificed for the sins of the people. Jesus is that perfect lamb as well - but for all time.

- *Intermediate*

1. Why was Passover a special day of remembrance for the Jews?

It commemorated the time that God saved the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and brought them to the Promised Land.

2. What did the blood of the Passover lamb accomplish for the Israelites?

Because of the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their houses, God passed over those houses - and the firstborn in those houses were spared from God's judgment on the Egyptians.

3. How did the two disciples find the location of the room in Jerusalem where they would prepare the Passover dinner?

A man carrying a pitcher of water met them when they went into Jerusalem. They were to follow him and at the house he entered, they were to tell the owner of that house that Jesus had sent them. That man then took them upstairs to a large room that was already set up for their Passover dinner. (Tradition says that this was Mark's mother's home.)

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.3 Last Supper of the Lamb

4. Why do you think Jesus did not tell the disciples beforehand where they would be celebrating the Passover?

Jesus knew that the Sanhedrin was looking to arrest him, and that Judas was planning on betraying his whereabouts to them. By not telling them beforehand, the disciples didn't know where the Passover would be until they arrived that night. That allowed Jesus to use the Passover supper to teach them his last message.

5. How did the disciples react when Jesus said one of them would betray him? Why do you think they reacted this way?

They were very distressed and each of them was worried that they were the one who would do this. So, they must have realized their own weaknesses and potential to betray him.

6. How did Jesus transform Passover? How was the Passover Lamb a prophetic symbol of Jesus?

He transformed Passover into Communion. Their deliverance from Egypt would now be overshadowed by a much greater salvation. This new salvation delivered them from God's judgment on their sin, and assured them the presence of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' blood was poured out for us, just as the Passover Lamb's was poured out for the Israelites. Jesus was innocent, just as the lamb was.

7. Why did the Passover lamb have to be spotless or "without blemish"?

It had to be a perfect sacrifice - the Israelites had to realize the price of the sacrifice for them to be saved from God's judgment on Egypt. And the lamb was a prophetic symbol of Jesus who is perfect and of great price.

8. Do you think the disciples understood that Jesus was about to die? Why do you think he told them that he would not drink wine again until the day of the Kingdom of God?

They may have accepted that this would happen at some point, but it was probably still more than they could understand; otherwise they would have stayed awake that night at Gethsemane. They had thought Jesus would choose that time to declare himself king and bring in the Kingdom. When Jesus said he would not drink wine again until the day of the Kingdom of God, he was promising the disciples that he would live again, that the Kingdom would come, and that he would reign then. This would provide some comfort and hope in what they were about to go through.

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.3 Last Supper of the Lamb

- *Challenging*

1. God would know which houses belonged to Israelites without the need for the lamb's blood, so why was a lamb sacrificed on the first Passover?

The Israelites had to exercise faith to sacrifice the lamb, and they had to realize that they were spared because of the lamb's blood, not because of their own righteousness. And they had to realize that the salvation of their firstborn came at a cost. It was also a prophetic symbol of Jesus.

2. Why do you think the Israelites had to eat bread without yeast for seven days when Moses led them out of Egypt?

They had to leave Egypt in a hurry, so they did not have time to let their bread rise before they baked it. Eating unleavened bread for seven days would remind them of how they left in a hurry that night. Also, yeast is often used in the Bible as a symbol of sin. Yeast, like sin, slowly but surely spreads throughout whatever it is in. So, the unleavened bread would be symbolic of leaving the sins of the Egyptian way of life and taking on a pure life in order to fulfill God's purposes for them.

3. Why do you think God told the Israelites to celebrate Passover every year for all those generations?

He never wanted them to forget that he was their saviour. And he was preparing their understanding for the salvation of Jesus.

4. Why do you think Jesus was being so cryptic (secretive) when he told the two disciples how to locate the place where they would eat the Passover?

Jesus knew that the Sanhedrin was looking to arrest him, and that Judas was planning on betraying his whereabouts to them. This way, the disciples didn't know where the Passover would be until they arrived that night.

5. Why was it important to Jesus to spend the Passover dinner with his disciples?

That allowed Jesus to use the Passover supper to teach them his last message, one that transformed Passover into Communion. And one that prepared them to understand his death on the cross.

6. How did Jesus transform Passover? In what way was the Passover lamb a prophetic symbol?

He transformed Passover into Communion. Their deliverance from Egypt would now be overshadowed by a much greater salvation. This new salvation delivers us from God's judgment on our sin, and assures us the presence of

Chapter Four: Fulfilling Prophecy

4.3 Last Supper of the Lamb

the Holy Spirit. Jesus' blood was poured out for us, just as the Passover lamb's was poured out for the Israelites. Jesus was innocent, just as the lamb was.

7. **Do you think his disciples understood the imagery Jesus used? Why did Jesus tell them that he would drink wine again in the Kingdom of God?**

Yes, at some level. This was so new for them that they could not fully grasp what Jesus was saying until after his death and resurrection. But it would have been in their mind as they went through his death, and resurrection. Jesus' reference to drinking wine in the Kingdom would have assured them that there would be the promised Kingdom, and that despite the cross, he would live again, and reign in that Kingdom.

8. **Rev. 13:8 says of Jesus, "He is the Lamb slaughtered before the world was made". How is that possible?**

God had his plan of redemption of mankind already prepared before he even started to create the world. Jesus existed before the creation of the world. So God knew we would sin even before he created us.

Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House
Mark 14:32-65

Before you read:

1. What are some difficult things that people are afraid to do, but they do them anyway, because they know it is right?

Answers will vary. The point is to get people thinking about self-denial. (Example: Going through job interviews in English to help support your family.)

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Multiple Choice

1. After eating the Passover meal, Jesus went to...
 - a. Gethsemane to pray alone.
 - b. Gethsemane to pray with his disciples
 - c. the Temple to pray alone.
 - d. Bethany to visit his friends
2. Jesus asked God...
 - a. to make him king
 - b. to keep the disciples awake
 - c. to take away the cup of death
 - d. to do what he, Jesus, wanted
3. The disciples...
 - a. could not stay awake
 - b. stayed with Jesus after his arrest
 - c. did not try to stop Jesus' arrest
 - d. prayed with Jesus in Gethsemane
4. Judas kissed Jesus to show...
 - a. that he loved Jesus
 - b. he was ready to follow Jesus
 - c. that he was Jesus' disciple

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father
5.1 Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House

- d. the guards which man to arrest
5. The Sanhedrin condemned Jesus to death because...
- a. he said he was the Messiah
 - b. he said he was the Son of Man
 - c. he said they would see him coming on the clouds of heaven
 - d. all of the above

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <u> e </u> 1. To desert | a. someone who was a friend but changes his loyalty and helps the enemy |
| <u> g </u> 2. overwhelmed | b. a piece of clothing |
| <u> a </u> 3. betrayer | c. speaking a lie about God |
| <u> f </u> 4. fulfilled | d. something that proves something |
| <u> b </u> 5. garment | e. leave when you should stay |
| <u> d </u> 6. evidence | f. completed |
| <u> c </u> 7. blasphemy | g. a feeling of complete loss of control |

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. Jesus felt overwhelmed about what he knew was going to happen to him.
2. Judas was called the betrayer of Jesus because he was one of his disciples.
3. Everyone deserted Jesus and ran away after he was arrested.
4. The chief priests could find no evidence to condemn Jesus.
5. They accused Jesus of blasphemy when he said he was the Messiah.
6. The young man left his garment behind as he rushed to flee the soldiers.
7. Jesus said that the Scriptures had to be fulfilled .

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father
5.1 Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House

Re-tell the story

- A. At Gethsemane Jesus went a bit away from Peter, James, and John to pray by himself. He prayed that if possible the Father would take this cup away from Him, but not as He willed but as the Father willed.
- B. When Jesus returned to his disciples he found them sleeping. He woke them up and told them to watch and pray so that they would not fall into temptation. (He returned to pray, then returned to the disciples and woke them again.
- C. When Jesus returned to the disciples the third time, Judas appeared with a crowd of soldiers and teachers of the law, and elders.
- D. Judas had told them that he would kiss the person they should arrest.
- E. When Jesus did not resist arrest, the disciples deserted him and fled into the night.
- F. They took Jesus to the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. When the chief priest asked Jesus if He was the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One, Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." At this the high priest tore his clothes and said that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy (for equating Himself with God) - and blasphemy deserved the death sentence.

Discussion

- *Easier*
 1. Why did Jesus go to Gethsemane?
He went there to pray.
 2. What did Jesus mean when he asked God "that the hour might pass" or for God to "Take this cup from me"?
"That the hour might pass" and "To remove this cup" meant don't let him have to go through this suffering and death.
 3. After Jesus finished praying, who came to Gethsemane and what did they do?
Judas and the soldiers, high priests, and elders came to arrest Jesus.
 4. What did the priests try to prove about Jesus?
They tried to prove that he should be put to death for his wrong teachings.
 5. What question did the high priest ask Jesus? What was his answer?

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father

5.1 Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House

The chief priest asked Jesus if He was the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One. Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." At this the high priest tore his clothes and said that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy (for equating Himself with God).

6. **Why did the priests get so upset when he told them this?**

Jesus was equating himself with God. To sit at the right hand of God was a position of equality with God.

7. **Do you think Jesus had a fair trial?**

No. It was a secret meeting at night. They couldn't prove what they wanted to prove. (Ironically to conduct a trial in this way was against Jewish law.)

8. **Why do you think God allowed this to happen?**

God had a bigger plan. Jesus' willing sacrifice was necessary to meet the sentence we deserve. So His submission to God's plan was essential.

• ***Intermediate***

1. **Why did Jesus go to Gethsemane? What did he do there? Why did he want his disciples to stay awake with him?**

He went there to pray. He talked to God about the unfolding events and he asked God if God would change His mind. He wanted his disciples to support him in prayer and just be by his side. He also told them to watch.

2. **What did Jesus ask God to do? Why is this important?**

He asked God to change His mind, but he chose to follow what God wanted. It was on this moment that the salvation of mankind rested. Jesus was not forced to be the Sacrifice. He chose to do God's will.

3. **After Jesus finished praying, who came to Gethsemane and why did they come there?**

Judas and the soldiers, chief priests, and elders came to arrest Jesus. It was a quiet spot far from the usual crowds who followed Jesus during the daytime.

4. **What did the priests try to prove about Jesus? Were they able to prove what they wanted?**

They tried to prove that he should be put to death for what they thought were his wrong teachings. They could not find any reliable witnesses.

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father

5.1 Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House

5. What was Jesus' reaction to the false witnesses? What was unusual about his answer to the high priest?

Jesus remained silent and gave no answer to the accusations made against him. He only answered when the high priest asked him, "*Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?*"

"I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Jesus makes a clear claim to be the Messiah for the first time in front of the high priest. Also, by saying that they would see him seated at the right hand of God. The term "God's right hand" in prophecy refers to the Messiah. To be seated at the right hand also meant to the Jews that Jesus was of equal position, honor, power and authority with God. (Why does Scripture emphasize the right hand of God? Got Questions. <https://www.gotquestions.org/right-hand-God.htm>. Accessed October 2019.)

6. Why did the priests get so upset when he told them this? Do you think the priests really wanted to know who Jesus was?

They didn't believe him. They were already looking for an excuse to kill him. If he spoke truthfully then they were in deep trouble. They did what guilty people do: make things worse. They were also furious with him for equating himself with God – this was blasphemy to them.

7. Do you think Jesus had a fair trial? What aspects seem unfair to you? Explain.

It was a secret trial not a public one; the witnesses were not found to agree (by law there had to be two in agreement). Jesus had no one to support him. (Answers vary.) The trial itself was illegal under Jewish law for several reasons. Some of these reasons are: it was forbidden to hold a trial during feast time and it was Passover; each member of the Sanhedrin was to vote individually, but Jesus was convicted by the high priest without a vote; if the death penalty was given, a night must pass before the sentence was carried out, but only a few hours passed before Jesus was crucified. (What trials did Jesus face before His crucifixion? Got Questions. <https://www.gotquestions.org/right-hand-God.htm>. Accessed October 2019.)

8. Why do you think did God allow this to happen?

God had a bigger plan. Jesus' willing sacrifice was necessary to take the punishment we deserve. His submission to God's plan was essential.

• *Challenging*

1. Why did Jesus go to Gethsemane? What did he do there? Why did he want his disciples to stay awake with him?

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father

5.1 Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House

He went there to pray. He talked to God about the unfolding events and he asked God if God would change His mind. He wanted his disciples to support him in prayer and just be by his side. He also told them to watch.

2. **What did Jesus ask God to do? Why is this important? What does it show about God and his ways?**

He asked God to change His mind, but he chose to follow what God wanted. It was on this moment that the salvation of mankind rested. Jesus was not forced to be the Sacrifice. He chose to do God's will. God's ways are not our ways. They are always better but sometimes don't look that way.

3. **After Jesus finished praying, who came to Gethsemane and why did they come there?**

Judas and the soldiers, priests, and elders came to arrest Jesus. It was a quiet spot far from the usual crowds who followed Jesus during the daytime.

4. **What did the priests try to prove about Jesus? Were they able to prove what they wanted?**

They tried to prove that he should be put to death for what they thought were his wrong teachings. They could not find any reliable witnesses.

5. **What was Jesus' reaction to the false witnesses? What was unusual about his answer to the high priest?**

Jesus remained silent and gave no answer to the accusations made against him. He only answered when the high priest asked him, *"Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"*

"I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Jesus makes a clear claim to be the Messiah for the first time in front of the high priest. Also, by saying that they would see him seated at the right hand of God. The term "God's right hand" in prophecy refers to the Messiah. To be seated at the right hand also meant to the Jews that Jesus was of equal position, honor, power and authority with God. (Why does Scripture emphasize the right hand of God? Got Questions. <https://www.gotquestions.org/right-hand-God.htm>. Accessed October 2019.)

6. **Why did the priests get so upset when he told them this? Do you think the priests really wanted to know who Jesus was?**

They didn't believe him. They were already looking for an excuse to kill him. If he spoke truthfully then they were in deep trouble. They did what guilty people do: make things worse. And Jesus was claiming to be equal to God, and that was blasphemy to them.

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father

5.1 Submission: In the Garden and at the Priest's House

7. **Do you think Jesus had a fair trial? What aspects seem unfair to you? Explain.**

It was a secret trial not a public one; the witnesses were not found to agree (by law there had to be two in agreement). Jesus had no one to support him. (Answers vary.) The trial itself was illegal under Jewish law for several reasons. Some of these reasons are: it was forbidden to hold a trial during feast time and it was Passover; each member of the Sanhedrin was to vote individually, but Jesus was convicted by the high priest without a vote; if the death penalty was given, a night must pass before the sentence was carried out, but only a few hours passed before Jesus was crucified. (What trials did Jesus face before His crucifixion? Got Questions. <https://www.gotquestions.org/right-hand-God.htm>. Accessed October 2019.)

8. **Why do you think God allowed this to happen?**

God had a bigger plan. Jesus' willing sacrifice was necessary. His submission to God's plan was essential.

Sacrifice: The Blood of the Lamb

Mark 15:1-39

Before you read:

1. What kinds of things do people do when they hate someone?
Answers will vary. The point is to get people thinking about how much Jesus was hated and why he was treated so horribly.

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

Put the story in correct order:

1. ___6___ They gave Jesus wine vinegar to drink.
2. ___1___ The chief priests brought Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor.
3. ___4___ People insulted and mocked Jesus.
4. ___5___ The whole land was dark from 12:00 until 3:00 in the afternoon.
5. ___7___ The centurion was sure that Jesus was the son of God
6. ___2___ The crowd told Pilate to set a criminal free instead of Jesus.
7. ___3___ Jesus was crucified at a place called Golgotha.

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| ___d___1. insurrectionists | a. made fun of |
| ___f___2. myrrh | b. gambled by throwing stones or dice |
| ___g___3. flogged | c. words showing disrespect |
| ___c___4. insult | d. people who fight against the government to destroy it |
| ___a___5. mocked | e. give up on someone; abandon |
| ___b___6. cast lots | f. a medicine that helps a little with pain |
| ___e___7. forsake | g. whipped; beaten with leather strips |

Chapter Five: Obeying the Father
5.2 Sacrifice: The Blood of the Lamb

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. The soldiers ___cast lots___ for the clothes of Jesus.
2. The wine they gave Jesus was mixed with ___myrrh___.
3. The ___insurrectionists___ committed murder in the uprising.
4. The religious leaders ___mocked___ him by telling him to, "Come down from the cross".
5. Pilate ordered Jesus to be ___ flogged ___ and then crucified to please the crowd.
6. The people who passed by Jesus hurled ___insults___ at him.
7. Jesus did not want God to ___ forsake ___ him, and he asked "Why?"

Re-tell the story

- A. It was the custom for Pilate to release a prisoner to the Jews during the festival of Passover. Pilate asked the people if they would like to have Jesus released. But the priests stirred up the crowd to ask for the release of Barabbas instead. Barabbas was an insurrectionist - a freedom fighter who was attacking Roman soldiers in an effort to re-establish an independent Judea. When Pilate asked the crowd what they wanted to do with Jesus, they cried out, "Crucify him."
- B. Pilate sent Jesus to be flogged before sending him to be crucified.
- C. Simon of Cyrene was passing through Jerusalem at the time. (Cyrene was a Greek city in Libya, northern Africa. Its ruins are near the modern village of Shahhat. We don't know the ethnicity of Simon. Cyrene had many Greeks, Jews, Romans, and Africans living there. But we know the Romans pulled Simon from the crowd to carry the crossbar for Jesus. An African would have stood out in the crowd for his darker skin and his strength.)
- D. Jesus was crucified at 9 in the morning. There was a sign that posted his crime posted on the cross. It read The King of the Jews. (Luke and John both record that the sign was written in 3 languages: Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. But the word John used for "Hebrew" would probably have meant "Aramaic". Aramaic was a common language of the Jews at that time, but Hebrew was still known and used by the priests. Greek was still the common language of the region and used in commerce. Latin was the language of the Romans.)
- E. At noon darkness came over the land and lasted until three in the afternoon. It was at three that Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

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- F. The Temple curtain ripped in two from top to bottom. (This was the curtain that separated the room called the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Temple. In the first Temple, Solomon's Temple, the Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy of Holies. The Ark was a manifestation of God's presence; He would speak between the cherubs on the Ark. So, the tearing of the curtain symbolized that there was now no longer a separation between God and man.)

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. **Where did the chief priests take Jesus after his trial?**
They took him to Pilate.
2. **Did Jesus answer his accusers? Why not?**
No. Jesus remained silent. The accusations were false, but Jesus obeyed God.
3. **Why did Pilate release Barabbas instead of Jesus?**
The crowds preferred Barabbas, and Pilate wanted to please the crowds.
4. **What were some of the insults Jesus heard?**
They mocked him about being the King of the Jews. They asked why couldn't he save himself?
5. **What were some of Jesus' last words before he died?**
"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*).
6. **Can you guess how the curtain in the temple could be torn from the top to the bottom? What meaning could that have?**
No human could have the strength or the way to rip the curtain completely in half, especially from the top (heavenward) to the bottom (earthward). This was a divine act showing there was no longer a separation between God and mankind. (The curtain separated the Holy of Holies in the Temple from the rest of the Temple. The Holy of Holies was believed to be the place where God's presence was, and only the high priest was allowed to go there and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) to burn incense and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. (However, the Ark of the Covenant was not present in the 2nd Temple. It had disappeared during the time of the Babylonian conquest. According to 2

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Maccabees, it was hidden by Jeremiah before the Babylonians entered Jerusalem. Revelation 11:19 says the Ark is in God's temple in heaven.)

7. What did the centurion say about Jesus' death? What strange things had happened that day to make him say that? He said, "Surely this man was the Son of God". Strange events: darkness at noon; Jesus not returning insults; Jesus crying out to God, and his ability to cry loudly before dying. (That last cry is likely the victorious "It is finished" recorded in Gospel of John.)

8. Do you agree with the centurion's words?
(Answers vary.)

- *Intermediate*

1. Where did the chief priests take Jesus after his trial? Why did they do that?

They took him to Pilate. They did not have legal power to execute Jesus, but they used their crowd to put political pressure on Pilate to pass the death sentence.

2. Did Jesus answer his accusers? Why not? Can you think of a reason he wouldn't?

No. Jesus remained silent. The accusations were false, but Jesus obeyed God. He had promised to do God's will and lay down his life. Prophecy foretold: "*He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.*"⁸ *By oppression and judgment he was taken away" (Isaiah 53:7,8).*

3. Who was Barabbas? Why was he in jail? Why did Pilate release Barabbas instead of Jesus?

Barabbas was a political prisoner, in jail most likely for the murder of Roman soldiers. The crowd had a choice to save one man and they chose Barabbas. The priests worked the crowd to make this choice.

4. This story has a lot of details such as names, exact times and places. What does this tell you about the information?

Details such as "at noon ...until 3:00", and "Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus", are evidence that the information came from eyewitnesses and therefore more reliable than hearsay. Mark is the earliest written account of Jesus. Alexander and Rufus may still have been living as members of the Church when it was written.

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5. **What were some of the insults Jesus heard?**
They mocked him about being the King of the Jews. They asked why he couldn't save himself. They were especially cruel in the face of extreme suffering when a kind word would go a long way.
6. **What were some of Jesus' last words before he died? Did he call on Elijah as some people thought? Who did he actually call on and why?**
Jesus cried out: "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" (which means "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*"). He wasn't crying out to Elijah- why would he do that? These were the words at the beginning of Psalm 22:1: "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?*"
The remainder of Psalm 22 describes Jesus' situation but always proclaims hope and God's victory! Perhaps he wanted to remind his followers of God's plan.
7. **What, do you think, does the division of the curtain in the temple mean?**
No human could have the strength or the way to rip the curtain completely in half, especially from the top (heavenward) to the bottom (earthward). This was a divine act showing there was no longer a separation between God and mankind. It implies access to God is now possible. (The curtain separated the Holy of Holies in the Temple from the rest of the Temple. The Holy of Holies was believed to be the place where God's presence was, and only the high priest was allowed to go there and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) to burn incense and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. (However, the Ark of the Covenant was not present in the 2nd Temple. It had disappeared during the time of the Babylonian conquest. According to 2 Maccabees, it was hidden by Jeremiah before the Babylonians entered Jerusalem. Revelation 11:19 says the Ark is in God's temple in heaven.)
8. **Do you agree with the belief the centurion expressed?**
(Answers vary.)

- ***Challenging***

1. **Where did the chief priests take Jesus after his trial? Why did they do that?**

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They took him to Pilate. They did not have legal power to execute Jesus, but they used their crowd to put political pressure on Pilate to pass the death sentence.

2. Did Jesus answer his accusers? Why not? Can you think of a reason he wouldn't? Why didn't he defend himself?

No. Jesus remained silent. The accusations were false, but Jesus obeyed God. He had promised to do God's will and lay down his life. Prophecy foretold: *"He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."*⁸ *By oppression and judgment he was taken away" (Isaiah 53:7,8).*

3. Who was Barabbas? Why was he in jail? Why did Pilate release Barabbas instead of Jesus?

Barabbas was a political prisoner, in jail probably for the murder of Roman soldiers. The crowd had a choice to save one man and they chose Barabbas. Jesus didn't defend himself, so Pilate felt his hands were tied. (But he knew he was condemning an innocent man- he caved to political pressure. Barabbas was just a convenient way to disguise his complicity.)

4. This story has a lot of details such as names, exact times and places. What does this tell you about the information?

Details such as "at noon ...until 3:00", and "Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus", are evidence that the information came from eye-witnesses and therefore are more reliable than hearsay. Mark is the earliest written account of Jesus. Alexander and Rufus may still have been living as members of the Church when it was written.

5. What were some of the insults Jesus heard? What attitude lies at the heart of these insults?

They mocked him about being the King of the Jews. They asked why he couldn't save himself. They were especially cruel in the face of extreme suffering when a kind word would go a long way. Pride is the sin that lies behind this self-righteous attitude.

6. What were some of Jesus' last words before he died? Did he call on Elijah as some people thought? Who did he actually call on and why?

Jesus cried out: *"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"* (which means *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*). He wasn't crying out to Elijah- why would he do that? These were the words at the beginning of Psalm 22:1: *"My God,*

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my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?"

The remainder of Psalm 22 describes Jesus' situation but always proclaims hope and God's victory! Perhaps he wanted to remind his followers of God's plan.

7. **What, do you think, does the division of the curtain in the temple mean?**

No human could have the strength or the way to rip the curtain completely in half, especially from the top (heavenward) to the bottom (earthward).

This was a divine act showing there was no longer a separation between God and mankind. It implies access to God is now possible.

(The curtain separated the Holy of Holies in the Temple from the rest of the Temple. The Holy of Holies was believed to be the place where God's presence was, and only the high priest was allowed to go there and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) to burn incense and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. (However, the Ark of the Covenant was not present in the 2nd Temple. It had disappeared during the time of the Babylonian conquest. According to 2 Maccabees, it was hidden by Jeremiah before the Babylonians entered Jerusalem.

Revelation 11:19 says the Ark is in God's temple in heaven.)

8. **Do you agree with the belief the centurion expressed?**

(Answers vary.)

Saviour: One Sunday Morning

Mark 15:42-47;

Mark 16 1-20

Before you read:

1. Are you afraid of death? Why or Why not?

Answers will vary. The point is to focus on the meaning of the resurrection - Death is defeated. (You may wish to hint that the story will explain why you do not fear death.)

What Do You Think?

Encourage students to express honest thoughts. Steer them back to the story if discussion gets sidetracked.

Passage Questions

True or False

1. Joseph of Arimathea stole Jesus' body. __F__
2. The women wanted to prepare Jesus' body with spices. __T__
3. No one knew where they put Jesus' body. __F__
4. Jesus' body wasn't in the tomb. __T__
5. Jesus appeared first to the eleven disciples. __F__
6. Jesus said whoever believed in Him would be saved. __T__
7. The disciples obeyed Jesus and preached everywhere. __T__

Match the following words with their meanings. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>__e__</u> 1. trembling | a. to tell someone they acted badly |
| <u>__d__</u> 2. condemned | b. supported what was said |
| <u>__f__</u> 3. alarmed | c. immersed in water |
| <u>__g__</u> 4. bewildered | d. considered to be guilty |
| <u>__c__</u> 5. baptized | e. shaking |
| <u>__a__</u> 6. rebuked | f. frightened |

___b___7. confirmed g. confused

Fill in the Blanks with the vocabulary words above.

1. The women felt ___alarmed___ when they couldn't find Jesus' body.
2. Jesus said whoever believes and is ___baptized___ will be saved.
3. Jesus ___rebuked___ the Eleven for their lack of faith.
4. Jesus was ___condemned___ and killed even though he was not guilty.
5. The women were ___trembling___ and ___bewildered___ after the young man in the tomb told them Jesus was alive again.
6. The disciples ___confirmed___ the word of the Lord by the signs they performed.

Re-tell the story

- A. Joseph of Arimathea asked permission of Pilate to take Jesus' body. He had it wrapped in linen cloth and placed in his own unused tomb. This tomb had been cut out of rock. After Jesus' body was placed there, he had a large stone rolled against the entrance of the tomb.
- B. When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to the tomb so that they could anoint Jesus' body (which was the custom of the time). They were wondering who would roll away the large stone so they could enter the tomb. But when they arrived at the tomb, they found that the stone had been rolled away already. As they entered the tomb they saw an angel sitting there. The angel told them that Jesus had risen and was going into Galilee. The angel told them to go tell the disciples and Peter. (John 24:4 says that the women saw two angels in the tomb. John 24:10 says that Joanna and others were also among the women who went to the tomb.)
- C. When Jesus rose, he first appeared to Mary Magdalene. (Matthew says that Jesus appeared to all three of those women as they left the tomb (Matthew 28:8-10).
- D. Jesus appeared to two disciples while they were walking in the country (on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-16).
- E. Jesus appeared to the disciples as they were eating. (Luke 24:37 says the disciples were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.) He rebuked them for their lack of faith and their refusal to believe those who

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had previously seen him. He told them to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

- F. Jesus ascended to heaven. (Luke 24:50 says the disciples were with him as he was taken up into heaven. Acts 1:12 says that the ascension happened on the Mount of Olives.)

Discussion

- *Easier*

1. What did Joseph of Arimathea do?

He went to Pilate to ask permission to move Jesus' body to his tomb. Then he took the body wrapped it in linen, placed it in his tomb and sealed the tomb with the stone.

2. How did the women know where to go to find the body of Jesus? Why were they going there?

They had followed Joseph to the tomb on Friday. They were returning to prepare his body with the customary spices.

3. What problem did they think they would have when they went there?

They were worried they would not be able to roll away the big stone in front of the tomb.

4. Who do you think was the young man? What did the young man say?

Probably an angel. He said Jesus wasn't there.

5. Why did the disciples not believe when people told them they had seen Jesus alive? What finally made the eleven disciples believe?

They didn't have faith in what Jesus had told them. They probably thought the reports about Jesus were false or based in hysteria. They were fearful and depressed. They had to see Jesus with their own eyes. (But John 20 says that when Mary Magdalene went to Peter and John, they did believe her and ran to the tomb.)

6. Is it possible for people to believe something they do not see themselves?

Yes, if they trust the person telling them, or they see other evidence confirming the truth, or God's Spirit convinces them. (Or all of the above.)

7. How important is faith when we want to follow Jesus? How do you think we get faith?

Absolutely important. We get faith from hearing the Word of God *with an open heart*. (Romans 10:17: ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the

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message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.) Faith is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5: 22) and we may ask God for more faith (Mark 9:24).

8. Jesus said that whoever believes in him will be saved. What will they be saved from?

They will be saved from the second death on the Day of Judgment. They will not be condemned as guilty but will live forever. *(John 3:16 - 18.) (You may also talk about why you do not fear death.)*

- **Intermediate**

1. What did Joseph of Arimathea do? Why did he have to ask?

He went to Pilate to ask permission to move Jesus body to his tomb. Jesus had been executed by the Romans and this fell under their jurisdiction. They had to release his body for burial. Usually the bodies were dumped in a refuse pit.

2. How did the women know where to go to find the body of Jesus? Why were they going there? What problem did they think they would have when they went there?

They had followed Joseph to the tomb on Friday. They were returning to prepare his body with the customary spices. They were worried they would not be able to roll away the big stone in front of the tomb.

3. Who do you think the young man was? What did the young man say? What does all this mean?

Probably an angel. He said Jesus wasn't there. He told them to tell the disciples to look for Him in Galilee. It means Jesus was no longer dead. He had risen. (John 24:4 says that the women saw two angels in the tomb. John 24:10 says that Joanna and others were also among the women who went to the tomb.)

4. Why were the women so frightened by this?

It was unexpected. It was beyond their experience. It had very big ramifications.

5. Why did the disciples not believe when people told them they had seen Jesus alive? Would you react the same way to this kind of news?

They didn't have faith in what Jesus had told them. They probably thought the reports about Jesus were false or based in hysteria. They were fearful and depressed. (Answers vary). (But John 20 says that when Mary

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Magdalene went to Peter and John, they did believe her and ran to the tomb.)

6. Is it possible for people to believe something they do not see themselves? Yes, if they trust the person telling them, or they see other evidence confirming the truth, or God's Spirit convinces them. (Or all of the above.)

7. What did Jesus tell his disciples to do? What would be proof to support their words? Do we need these proofs today?

He said to them, *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."* The proof to support their words would be these signs: *"In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."*

We have the Bible today and His word is sufficient. However, God still does miracles on occasion with some people according to His purposes.

8. How important is faith when we want to follow Jesus? How do you think we get faith?

Absolutely important. We get faith from hearing the Word of God *with an open heart.* (Romans 10:17: ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.) Faith is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5: 22) and we may ask God for more faith (Mark 9:24).

9. Jesus said that whoever believes in him will be saved. What will they be saved from?

They will be saved from the second death on the Day of Judgment. They will not be condemned as guilty but will live forever. (John 3:16 - 18.) (You may also talk about why you do not fear death.)

• *Challenging*

1. What did Joseph of Arimathea do? Why did he have to ask? What is the significance of that?

He went to Pilate to ask permission to move Jesus body to his tomb. Jesus had been executed by the Romans and this fell under their jurisdiction.

They had to release his body for burial. Usually the bodies were dumped in a refuse pit. Joseph did not want that to happen to the body of Jesus, and in asking he fulfilled the prophesy spoken by Isaiah 53:9 *"He was assigned a*

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grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth"

2. How did the women know where to go to find the body of Jesus? Why were they going there? What problem did they think they would have when they went there?

They had followed Joseph to the tomb on Friday. They were returning to prepare his body with the customary spices. They were worried they would not be able to roll away the big stone in front of the tomb.

3. Who do you think was the young man? What did the young man say? What were the implications of his words?

Probably an angel. He said Jesus wasn't there. He told them to tell the disciples to look for Him in Galilee. It means Jesus was no longer dead. He had risen. (John 24:4 says that the women saw two angels in the tomb. John 24:10 says that Joanna and others were also among the women who went to the tomb.)

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It was unexpected. It was beyond their experience. It had very big ramifications.

5. Why did the disciples not believe when people told them they had seen Jesus alive? Would you react the same way to this kind of news?

They didn't have faith in what Jesus had told them. They probably thought the reports about Jesus were false or based in hysteria. They were fearful and depressed. (Answers vary.) (But John 20 says that when Mary Magdalene went to Peter and John, they did believe her and ran to the tomb.)

6. Is it possible for people to believe something they do not see themselves?

Yes, if they trust the person telling them, or they see other evidence confirming the truth, or God's Spirit convinces them. (Or all of the above.)

7. What did Jesus tell his disciples to do? What would be proof to support their words? *Do we need these kinds of proofs today? What do we have that the early church did not?*

He said to them, *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."* The proof to support their words would be these signs: *"In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."*

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(Sometimes people need these proofs but now we have the Bible that teaches us, so signs are not so necessary. However, God still does give some people miracles on occasion for His purposes.)

8. How important is faith when we want to follow Jesus? How do you think we get faith?

Absolutely important. We get faith from hearing the Word of God. (Romans 10:17: ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.) Faith is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5: 22) and we may ask God for more faith (Mark 9:24).

9. Jesus said that whoever believes in him will be saved. What will they be saved from?

They will be saved from the second death on the Day of Judgment. They will not be condemned as guilty but will live forever. (John 3:16 - 18.) (You may also talk about why you do not fear death.)

