

Jesus is Betrayed

Key Verse:
“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”
 Matthew 5:44

Extra: List some things you can do to practice what the Key Verse says.

Level 4 lesson 9

Read Matthew 26:14-16, John 13:21-31 and Zechariah 11:12

Isn't it amazing how quickly the year rolls around? It's already Easter time again! Sadly, for some people, it is simply a holiday; a time to spend with the family and for rest and recreation. In fact, Easter celebrates the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. These events are so important for everyone to reflect on, and for Christians, it is probably the most important time of the year. Let's remind ourselves again of what happened.

Judas Iscariot was one of the Lord's disciples, one of those men who had followed Him and been learning from Him for about 3 years. This was really the most incredible privilege. In that time, he had seen Jesus do many amazing miracles, heard Him teach many wonderful truths, and been able to observe Jesus' life and manner closely, day by day. Yet, when Jesus' enemies were trying to capture Him, Judas was willing to help them!

He went to the Chief Priests and asked, “What will you give me if I deliver Jesus into your hands?” What terrible treachery from one who had only ever known love and kindness from the Lord. Finally a deal was struck for thirty pieces of silver - the going price for a common slave! From that moment on, Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus. His chance came during the Passover celebrations (a special feast celebrated by the Jews each year) to remember when God had delivered them from slavery in the land of Egypt.

As the meal began, Jesus took some bread, dipped it in the dish and passed it to Judas. In Middle Eastern culture, this was how a host honoured a guest at his table.

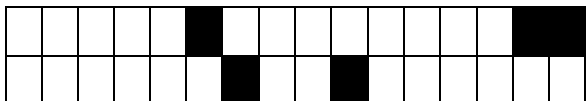

Jesus once said that if we only love those who love us, we are no better than anyone else in the world; after all, it is not hard to love your friends!.

To really be His followers, He said, we need to be people who will also love those who hate us! We sometimes forget that Jesus had always known that Judas would betray Him - yet He had always loved him and treated him equally with the others. Right until the end, Jesus was a friend to Judas, even as he planned to betray Him. What an example of love for us!

At this point, Jesus said to Judas, “What you have decided to do, do quickly!” Judas immediately left the room and went off into the night to arrange his Master's arrest. However, because Judas was in charge of the money-bag, the other disciples assumed that Jesus had sent him out to buy something for the meal or to give something to the poor (which was a custom at this time of the year). Once Judas had left, Jesus spoke to His disciples about their Heavenly home, where He was soon going, to prepare a place for them.

If the disciples had known how the events of the next few hours would unfold, they would have realized more fully, the importance of these encouraging words from the Lord Jesus. As followers of Jesus in our modern society today, even in the most terrible times of life we can lean on the same promise that the Lord made to the disciples that night: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God; trust also in Me. In My Father's house there are many rooms. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me, that you may also be with me where I am.” When the Lord had finished speaking and praying for the disciples, they sang a hymn together and then left for the Mount of Olives.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1a. Who betrayed the Lord Jesus? 1b. How much did he receive?	a.  b. 
2. What was the Passover Feast in memory of?	.....
3. Why did Jesus give the piece of bread to Judas?	.....
4. What did Judas do after he had taken the food?	.....
5. What did Jesus promise to the disciples in the words He spoke to them?	.....

My Name is Age

The Trial of Jesus

Key Verse:

“A voice from the clouds said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.’”

Matthew 17:5

Extra: What do you think about Jesus’ trial?

Level 4 lesson 10

Read Matthew 26:36-56, John 19:1-16 and Isaiah 53:3-7

Imagine if you were very upset about some bad news or terrible circumstances, but your friends were too tired to listen! Well, sadly, that’s what happened to Jesus!

Having read the passages for this week, you will recall how Jesus took His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane, which is at the foot of the Mount of Olives. There, he asked them to stay and watch with Him while He prayed. You see, Jesus is truly God and He knew exactly what lay before Him in the future hours.

Imagine how terrible it would be, to know the very hour you were going to die, and the terrible suffering you would have to endure! Yes, Jesus knew all that and always had. Even so, Philippians 2:5-11 reminds us, that He was willing to come to earth and die on a cross for us. He was willing to experience the agony of crucifixion and even worse - to be separated from His Father, as He took the sin of the world upon Himself, so as to obey His Father’s will.

So, as Jesus thought about all these things that lay ahead of Him, humanly speaking, the anticipation was almost unbearable. We cannot begin to understand Jesus’ mental anguish at this time. He said to His disciples, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.” In Luke 22 we read that His sweat was like drops of blood and God sent an angel to strengthen Him.

Yet even at such a time, He still prayed to His Father, “Not my will, but yours be done!” This should be the attitude of our lives as Christians, too. Like Jesus, we too can always depend on our Heavenly Father for comfort and strength. Yet as Jesus prayed, the disciples grew tired and fell asleep, because of how late it was!

Even as Jesus confirmed His total submission to His Father’s will, the stillness of the garden was suddenly broken by a crowd of people and soldiers approaching! Leading them was Judas. He stepped forward to greet Jesus with a kiss, which was his way of identifying Jesus to the soldiers. “Why do you come out against me with sticks and spears, as though I was a thief?” Jesus asked. However, He didn’t try to fight or escape: this was the appointed time and He let Himself be arrested and led away for trial.

Even though it was very early in the morning, the Chief Priests took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman ruler. “What charge do you bring against this man?” he asked them. They answered, “If He wasn’t an evil-doer we wouldn’t have brought Him to you.” Pilate, thinking it was some relatively trivial matter and not wanting to get involved, said, “Take Him away and judge Him according to your own law.”

This however, was not what the Jewish leaders wanted. They wanted Jesus dead, and they were willing to do or say anything to see it happen. “We’re not allowed to execute anyone, and that’s why we’ve brought Him to you,” they said. “This man deserves to die. He has been teaching lies, telling people not to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He is the Christ, a King.” Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the King of the Jews? The chief priests and rulers of your own people have brought you to me. What have you done?” Of course, nothing Jesus said convinced Pilate of His guilt; quite the opposite in fact. “I can find no fault in this just man!” Pilate proclaimed to the crowd.

Pilate then continued, “It is your custom at this time of year, that I release a prisoner to you. Shall I release to you the King of the Jews?” “No!” the people cried out, “Not this man! Give us Barabbas!” (Barabbas was a robber awaiting execution). “What shall I do with this man Jesus?” Pilate then asked. The crowd shouted loudly, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why did Jesus go to Gethsemane?	.....
2. What was His final prayer to His Father before He was arrested?	.....
3. Who was Jesus taken to? Why was He taken to this man?	.....
4. After talking to Jesus, what did the Roman ruler say to the crowd about Him? 1=a, 2=b, 3=c	9 6 9 14 4 14 15 6 1 21 12 20 9 14 20 8 9 19 13 1 14
5. What do you think was the most important question Pilate asked the crowd? Why?	.....

The Lord Jesus Crucified

Extra: Compare the story of the crucifixion with Psalm 22.

Level 4 lesson 11

Key Verse:
**“Our great God
 and Saviour,
 Jesus Christ,
 who gave
 Himself for us.”**
 Titus 2:13-14

Read **John 19:13-27**, **Luke 23:33-47** and **Psalm 22:1-24**

Pilate, who was unwilling to sentence any innocent man to death, went back inside to question Jesus again. There he found the soldiers had dressed Jesus in a purple robe, put a crown of thorns on His head, and were beating Him mercilessly. “Hail, King of the Jews!” they mocked and taunted Him. Pilate ordered them to take Jesus outside before the people. Perhaps he hoped that the crowd, seeing Jesus had been beaten, would be satisfied. “Behold your King!” he said.

The response from the angry crowd was loud and clear. “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” they cried out. “Shall I crucify your King?” Pilate asked. “We have no king but Caesar,” they shouted back. “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar!” This threat was too much for Pilate. Caesar Augustus, the all-powerful Roman Emperor, was a man to be feared - and not crossed! So, afraid for his own safety, Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified, even though He was innocent.

The Bible says that “the fear of man is a snare,” (Proverbs 29:25) and Pilate was a clear example. If he had feared and respected God above all else, he would not have done such a terrible thing. But because he regarded people more than God, he was willing to condemn an innocent man - the Lord Jesus Christ Himself - to death.

Now, as the light of dawn broke across the sky, Jesus made His way through the crowded city streets. Exhausted, His body cruelly whipped and beaten, He struggled under the weight of the large wooden cross He was made to carry. Then outside the city gates, on a hill called Calvary, Jesus was nailed to that cross with terrible iron spikes. Surely, this was the ‘darkest’ day in the history of the world. Two other men - both thieves - were also crucified, one on Jesus’ left and the other on His right.

Even as Jesus hung on the cross, in intense physical agony, His thoughts were for others present. For the cruel, brutal soldiers who had nailed Him to the cross, He prayed, “Father, forgive them - they don’t know what they’re doing.” When one of the thieves crucified next to Him realized his own sin and recognised Jesus to be truly God, Jesus graciously replied, “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” Then, looking down at His mother Mary, filled with grief and sorrow for her son, Jesus said, “Woman, take my disciple John to be your son.” And to John, He said, “Take care of her as your mother.”

Then when the chief priests and rulers mocked Him, saying, “If you are really the Son of God, come down from the cross and save yourself!” - Jesus did not respond. This is truly remarkable! You and I both know that the desire to prove ourselves innocent of something and prove we are telling the truth, is one of the strongest feelings we have! And we know that Jesus certainly could have. But of course the work of salvation (the redemption of mankind) was of far greater importance. By not saving Himself from the cross, Jesus was providing the only way that they (and ourselves) could be saved from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death.

Next a miracle happened: the sky suddenly became dark as night, even though it was the middle of the day! There in the darkness, veiled from human view, Jesus bore God’s righteous punishment for the sin of the whole world. Then Jesus gave that amazing cry from His lips, “It is finished!” Finally, Jesus prayed to His Father, “Into Your hands, I commit my Spirit.” At that moment in the eerie darkness, the Lord Jesus allowed Himself to die. The perfect ‘Lamb of God’ had laid down His life as a sacrifice to God the Father. Jesus did this so that all those who believe what happened, turn away from their sin, and follow Him, can find forgiveness, salvation, peace, and eternal life with God. Now that is the true meaning of Easter!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What prayer did Jesus offer for those who ill-treated him?

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2. What did the priests and rulers mockingly say?

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3. Why was it necessary for Jesus to die on the cross?

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4. What does Titus 2 say about the Lord Jesus (key verse)

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5. Describe the meaning of Easter in your own words.

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Christ, the Risen Saviour!

Read Luke 24:1-27 and
1 Corinthians 15

Key Verse:

“I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in.”

Revelation 3:20

Extra: How can we have our sins forgiven?

Level 4 lesson 12

We have studied together some of the many things that took place during that first ‘Easter weekend.’ We will never fully appreciate the suffering, sorrow and shame that the Lord Jesus endured for us during those dark hours. But we know that He endured it all so that we might be saved, forgiven of all our sin, and made fit to go to Heaven.

We have seen the different ways in which people treated Him. Judas betrayed Him, and Peter denied that he even knew Him. The other disciples were also so scared and frightened for their own lives they ran away and left Him. The soldiers mocked and taunted Him, pressing a cruel crown of thorns onto His head, and beating Him horribly. And then Pilate, too weak-minded and afraid to stand up for the truth, denied Him justice, even though he knew that Jesus was innocent of any charges laid against Him.

However, there were those who loved Jesus, and who followed Him through all those terrible hours with faithful, sorrowing hearts. The thief on the cross realised Jesus was the Son of God and that He was dying for the sins of others, so the thief trusted in Christ as his Saviour. Then when he died that day, he went straight to Heaven because Jesus had forgiven all his past sins.

Dear students, what will you do with Jesus TODAY? Those who hated Him, crucified Him. However, God raised Him from the dead on the third day and today He is a LIVING SAVIOUR. He is able to forgive all sin; able to give power over sin, day by day, able

to fill our lives with joy and gladness; and able to strengthen us throughout our lives.

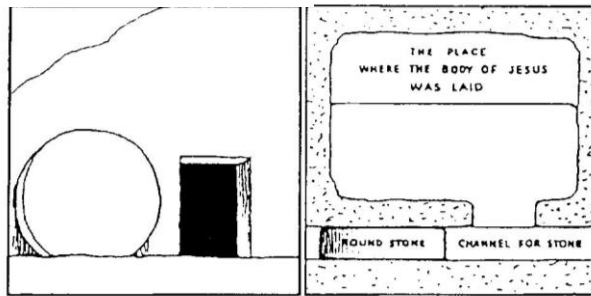
In our reading today, we find two men walking along the road to Emmaus, discussing all the happenings of the first Easter weekend. They were troubled and saddened by Jesus’ death; they did not yet know that He had risen from the dead. Suddenly, “Jesus Himself came near, and went with them, but they did not know Him.” He asked why they were sad and after they answered, He began to explain to them how all the Scriptures (the Old Testament of course, since the New Testament had not been written then) foretold that Christ must come and suffer all these things. So they walked along together and their hearts were thrilled as Jesus taught them many things concerning Himself.

As they neared their home, Jesus acted like He would walk on, but they invited him to come in to stay the night. So Jesus did, and later when He gave thanks for the meal, “their eyes were opened” and they happily realised it was Jesus Himself!

Today the Lord Jesus stands at your heart’s door and says: “May I come in?” He wants us to respond from our hearts and ask Him to come in and change us. He would never have gone into the home of the two in our story if he had not been asked. Neither will He come into your life unless He is asked. Asking Jesus to come in to our lives also involves telling Him you are sorry for your sins and asking Him to forgive and save you, and then to help you to live your life in a right way that pleases Him. Will you ask Him today?

The Empty Grave.

The left picture shows the stone rolled away from the entrance to the grave.



The right picture shows a plan (i.e. looking from above) of the tomb.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why did Pilate deny Jesus justice?	.....
2. Because the Lord Jesus is a risen and living Saviour today, what is he able to do for us?	.....
3. What happened when Jesus and the two men reached Emmaus?	T _ _ _ I _ _ _ _ _ H _ _ T _ C _ _ _ I _
4. What else is involved with asking the Lord Jesus into your life? Have you done this?
5. If you have a question about becoming a Christian, do ask us.

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