

# THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

MATTHEW 26:1-27:55, MARK 14:22-15:40,  
LUKE 22:1-23:56 & JOHN 18:1-19:37

## GOAL

▶ To help children understand why Jesus died and accept His death for sins on their behalf.

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## CHARACTERS

▶ **Jesus:** Though innocent, he died. His death was the sacrifice for our sins.

**Judas:** One of Jesus' disciples. Judas betrayed Jesus and helped the religious leaders arrest Jesus.

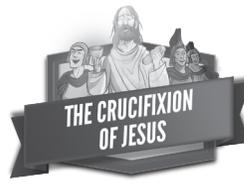
**Peter:** One of Jesus' disciples. Peter cut off one of an ear of one of the guards who came to arrest Jesus. Also, just as Jesus predicted, Peter denied Him three times.

**Pilate:** A Roman official who gave the official approval for Jesus to be killed.

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## MEMORY VERSE

▶ **1 Corinthians 15:3:** Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.



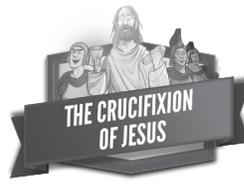
## OVERVIEW

- ▶ **Read over Matthew 26:1-56:** Jesus, betrayed by one of His disciples, is arrested and tried before the religious leaders. Based on testimony of false witnesses, the religious leaders ruled to have Jesus killed. They delivered Jesus to the Roman governor, Pilate. In response to the requests of the Jewish people, Pilate ordered Jesus to be whipped and crucified. Beaten and bloodied, Jesus carried His cross to Golgotha, where His hands and feet were nailed to the cross and then lifted upright between two thieves. While hanging on the cross, the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders mocked Him. When Jesus died, the earth shook, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the veil in the temple was torn in two. Those who were with Jesus after his death and witnessed these things were filled with awe and knew that He truly was the Son of God.
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## SUGGESTIONS

- ▶ When thinking about Jesus, who was perfect and sinless, coming to die for our sins, we often feel bad. Jesus was not sad or angry that He had to do it. Before He created the universe, God knew we would need a savior, and He created us even still. From our creation to our salvation, God's plans and actions are done out of love.

To receive salvation through Jesus' death on the cross, all we need to do is accept Jesus as our Savior.



**PRE-LESSON  
ACTIVITY**

- ▷ **Gospel Treasure Hunt | Supplies:** Print pictures of the following items: a cup, a loaf of bread, praying hands, silver coins, an ear, a rooster, a gavel, a leather whip, a crown of thorns, nails, a cross, a sword, and a stone.

Split the class into teams. Tell the students that there are pictures hidden around the room, and the team to find the most wins. As you count the number of pictures for each team, explain how each pictured item relates to the lesson.

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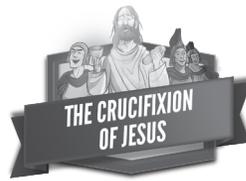
**MEMORY  
VERSE  
MEANING**

- ▷ **1 Corinthians 15:3:** The plan for Jesus to die for our sins was planned long ago. Prophets who lived long before Jesus' birth spoke of the coming Messiah, detailing what His life would be like, what He would be like, and what He would do. Jesus' life and death fulfilled all of these prophecies. While the Word of God is literally written by people, every word is divinely inspired. We can trust that the Bible represents God's story, and that we can use it to learn about Him and His love for us.
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**POST-LESSON  
ACTIVITY**

- ▷ **Popsicle Stick Cross | Supplies:** Popsicle sticks, glue, yarn, markers, other decorative craft supplies.

Give children two popsicle sticks and have them create a cross by either gluing the sticks together or using yarn. They may decorate the crosses using whatever craft supplies are available.

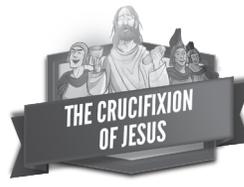


**TAKE  
HOME**



Because we love Jesus so much, it is easy to feel bad that He had to come to Earth to live as a man destined to die for something He didn't do. But we must remember that Jesus was never sad about His mission. He knew from the moment He created the universe that He would do this, and that knowledge didn't make Him change anything. His mission on Earth was done out of a love so deep, we cannot understand it. Sin had separated us from God, and Jesus' death changed all of that.

Salvation through Jesus' death is the greatest gift we've ever been given. Jesus' acts, planned before the universe was created and carried out to perfection, should be celebrated, not mourned.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 1



**Q1a:** The last meal Jesus had with His disciples was in celebration of what holiday?

**A1:** Passover

**Q1b:** If you knew that you would never see or speak to your best friend again, what would you say to him or her?

**TN:** Perhaps students would confess something, or express their gratitude for their friendship, or impart some wisdom that has helped them get through situations. As Creator of the entire universe, Jesus had quite a lot of information He could pass on to His disciples!

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### SLIDE 2

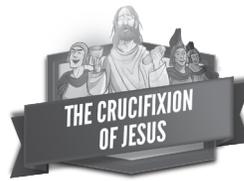


**Q2a:** Who dipped his food in the bowl at the same time Jesus did?

**A2:** Judas

**Q2b:** What would you do if you knew someone was going to betray you?

**TN:** With that kind of knowledge, our first instinct often is to do something to stop the person from causing any harm to us. Jesus knew of the coming betrayal, but He did nothing because He knew that God would use all of the terrible things that were about to occur to make something wonderful happen.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 3



**Q3a:** Who did the disciples learn would betray Jesus?

**A3:** Judas

**Q3b:** Who in your life would you be most surprised to find out had betrayed you?

**TN:** It is easy to think that people we don't like or people who don't like us could betray us, but we never suspect the people close to us. Jesus was not surprised, but Judas' fellow disciples were shocked to learn that he would do something so horrible to Jesus.

### SLIDE 4

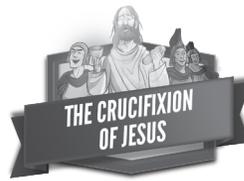


**Q4a:** How many times did Jesus say Peter would deny Him?

**A4:** Three times

**Q4b:** Do you know what Communion or the Lord's Supper is?

**TN:** Some students may have taken Communion, but they may not understand what it is. Being told that we are to remember Jesus by eating His flesh and drinking His blood is pretty confusing! Let them know that Communion is an opportunity for us to reflect on the sacrifice and suffering that Jesus went through to save us. His body was beaten and bloodied, which is symbolized by the broken bread. His blood was shed, which is symbolized by the wine.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 5



**Q5a:** What did Judas get for handing over Jesus to the religious leaders?

**A5:** A lot of money

**Q5b:** If you could go back in time and meet Judas, what would you say to him?

**TN:** It's so easy to hate Judas. He committed a horrible sin for evil reasons, but he's just a man who fell to temptation. God used Judas' sin to play out a plan that had been laid out before the universe was created—a plan to save us all from our tendency to fall to temptation and sin. When we encounter someone who has sinned, it is important to treat them with love and forgiveness, because that's what God did for us.

### SLIDE 6

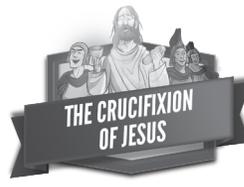


**Q6a:** What did Jesus do in the garden?

**A6:** He prayed.

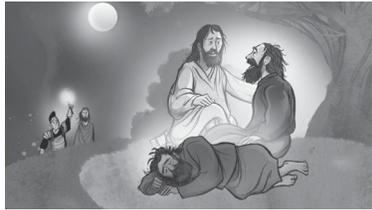
**Q6b:** When you have a cavity, what do you need to do?

**TN:** You need to go to the dentist to have it taken care of, or it will get worse. Having a cavity filled is often painful, but it is the solution to the problem. Jesus knew that the solution to the problem of sin was for Him to suffer and die. While He would have preferred not to go through the painful death He knew was coming, He submitted His life to the will of God.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 7



**Q7a:** What were the disciples doing while Jesus was praying?

**A7:** They were sleeping.

**Q7b:** Have you ever been unable to communicate something important to someone?

**TN:** Over and over again, Scriptures recount instances in which Jesus communicates something important to His disciples, and He is met with the equivalent of 12 blank stares. At times, it's hard not to think the disciples might be a little stupid. The information Jesus was giving the disciples makes sense to us because we know the whole story, but they didn't have the luxury of knowing how everything plays out. The things Jesus was telling them didn't make sense: How can a righteous man be arrested for something he hasn't done? How can a man be killed and come back to life? Jesus may as well have been speaking gibberish! We know better, though!

### SLIDE 8

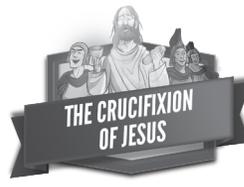


**Q8a:** How did Judas signal to the guards which person was Jesus?

**A8:** Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek.

**Q8b:** Do you think Jesus can relate to the problems you face in your life?

**TN:** Jesus lived so long ago, and He's God, so how can He possibly understand what it's like to be human today? Jesus gave up His life in heaven to live on Earth as a human man. While He may not understand what it's like to be bullied on Facebook, He does know what it is like to be persecuted, taunted, and hurt emotionally and physically. In His life on Earth, He experienced every emotion we face today, both good and bad. We can always seek comfort and guidance from Jesus in times of trouble, because He has experienced life.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 9



**Q9a:** Who chopped off the servant's ear?

**A9:** Peter

**Q9b:** You see someone stealing your pet. What is your first thought on how you would react?

**TN:** Peter loved Jesus. He saw a righteous man who had never done anything wrong get arrested for something He did not do. This was a huge injustice! He reacted without thinking and caused something horrible to happen. He didn't understand that the enemy's plan to kill Jesus would be used by God to save the world.

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### SLIDE 10

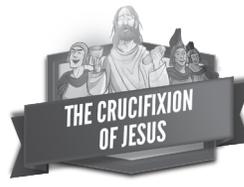


**Q10a:** What did Jesus do to heal the servant's ear?

**A10:** He touched it.

**Q10b:** What do you think it says about Jesus that the last miracle He performed was for an enemy?

**TN:** Let your students think about this and discuss it. Jesus is pure love, and love is the motivation behind everything He has ever done and will do. No matter what we've done, His thoughts toward us are good.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 11



**Q11a:** What did the disciples do after Jesus was arrested?

**A11:** They ran away.

**Q11b:** Which do you think is more likely: being struck by lightning or becoming an astronaut for NASA?

**TN:** The odds of being hit by lightning are 1 in 12,000. The odds of becoming an astronaut are about 1 in 12.1 million. The odds of one person fulfilling eight of the more than 300 Messianic prophecies is 1 in 100 quadrillion (100,000,000,000,000,000). Jesus fulfilled all of these prophecies, including those detailing the method and timing of His arrest. Some scholars say it is statistically improbable that anyone except Jesus could have fulfilled every one of these prophecies.

### SLIDE 12

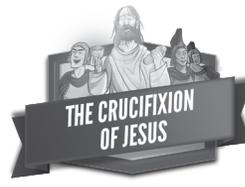


**Q12a:** What did Jesus say that enraged the religious leaders?

**A12:** Jesus said that He was the Son of God.

**Q12b:** Is it possible to make everyone happy?

**TN:** It is not possible. In Jesus' case, the fact that He is the Son of God made some people very happy; for others, that fact made them incredibly angry.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 13



**Q13a:** What did Peter hear after he lied three times about being one of Jesus' disciples?

**A13:** A rooster crowed.

**Q13b:** What is your biggest pet peeve?

**TN:** Now ask the students if they have ever done whatever it is that they find so irritating. It happens! Sometimes, we find ourselves doing the exact thing we never could have imagined doing. This happened to Peter. He was going through a really trying time, and the only way he could think to get through it was to do something he swore he wouldn't. Like Peter, sometimes we do these things without even realizing it. Until that rooster crowed, it hadn't dawned on Peter that he had denied Jesus even once, let alone three times. This part of the story really shows how important it is to keep our minds on Jesus. He will help us get through tough times without sinning.

### SLIDE 14

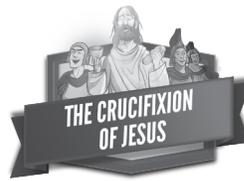


**Q14a:** What did Judas do before he hung himself?

**A14:** He went back to the priests and threw the coins on the floor.

**Q14b:** Was Judas' sin the worst sin ever committed?

**TN:** All sin is bad, but all sins can be forgiven if we believe in Jesus and the sacrifice He made for us. Once we have declared our love for Jesus, nothing can separate us from the love and forgiveness of God.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 15



**Q15a:** What was the name of the Roman leader?

**A15:** Pilate

**Q15b:** If nine out of ten people recommend chewing on rocks to cure a toothache, would you take their advice?

**TN:** No! Chewing on rocks does not sound like a good idea, no matter what people say. Based on the lies they had cooked up to get Jesus in trouble, the religious leaders had whipped the people into a frenzy. The crowd calling for Jesus' death was made up of people who believed what they had been told by someone else. It's likely that many of the people there didn't even know who Jesus was or His side of the story. These people were a part of a life and death decision, and they had no real knowledge of the situation! As Christians, we have powerful tools to help us determine whether or not something is a good idea—the Holy Spirit and the Bible. Before we make a decision or add our voice to cause, we should pray for wisdom and we should check to see if the principles behind claims are supported by Scripture.

### SLIDE 16

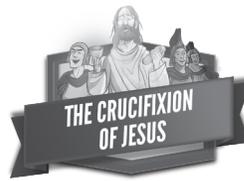


**Q16a:** Why did Pilate agree to have Jesus beaten and crucified?

**A16:** To keep the peace

**Q16b:** If you watch your dog dig up all the flowers in the garden, but do nothing about it, are you blameless?

**TN:** Just as you didn't dig up the flowers, neither did Pilate whip Jesus or nail Him to the cross. Pilate, the religious leaders, and the people in the crowd were all responsible for Jesus' death. But so too are we. Because we sin, Jesus needed to come to die for us. This sounds harsh, but there is another way to look at it. Because sin separated us from God, Jesus had a choice: Suffer and die as the sacrifice that pays for our sins, or live without us for eternity. Jesus chose to suffer for us because He wanted to live for eternity with us.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 17



**Q17a:** What kind of crown did the Roman soldiers put on Jesus' head?

**A17:** A crown of thorns

**Q17b:** Would throwing your best clothes in a puddle of mud get them nice and clean?

**TN:** That doesn't make any sense! So how can it be true that the blood of Jesus has made us white as snow? Blood causes stains, so this idea seems like nonsense—but it is true. Jesus was a pure, sinless sacrifice. His death wiped the slate clean for us. So as ridiculous as it sounds, His blood has made us clean.

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### SLIDE 18

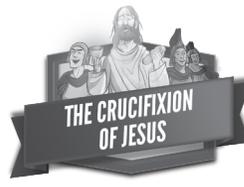


**Q18a:** Who helped Jesus carry His cross to the top of Golgotha?

**A18:** Simon of Cyrene

**Q18b:** Have you ever felt moved to help someone?

**TN:** That feeling is the Holy Spirit moving us to help others. When we acknowledge the feeling and act on it we are accomplishing both of Jesus' commandments: Love our God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength; and love our neighbor as ourselves.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 19



**Q19a:** Who was crucified beside Jesus?

**A19:** Two thieves.

**Q19b:** If someone called your best friend a nasty name, would it change your opinion of your friend?

**TN:** Good friends love each other despite their flaws. Insults directed at loved ones and at ourselves can be hurtful and make us sad. On top of the excruciating pain He felt physically, Jesus was in emotional agony. The people He loved so much hated Him and thought Him to be no better than a common thief. When insults are directed our way, it is important to remember that we should not find value in what others think and say about us. Our value comes from our Creator. Scripture calls us the light of the world, chosen and dearly loved, victorious, the righteousness of God, and many other wonderful things. If that is what God says we are, then that is the truth.

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### SLIDE 20



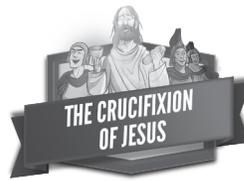
**Q20a:** What did the sign hung above Jesus' head say?

**A20:** It said "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

**Q20b:** What are some good excuses to get out of doing the dishes?

**TN:** Let the students give some excuses. Explain to the students that we are given chores to learn responsibility and to help out our families. As Jesus hung on the cross, people mocked Him and said things like, "If you're really the Son of God, save yourself!" Jesus could have done just that, but He didn't. Jesus endured torture and an incredibly long and painful death because He knew it was His job—His job was to save us.

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## QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 21

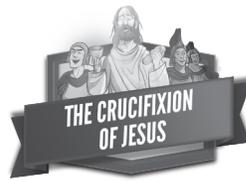


**Q21a:** Why were guards posted outside Jesus' tomb?

**A21:** To make sure no one tried to steal Jesus' body to make it look like He had risen from the dead.

**Q21b:** Which job sounds easier: Keeping the ocean waves from touching the beach or keeping Jesus in the tomb?

**TN:** Talk about impossible jobs! Knowing what we know about Jesus and how this story turns out, putting guards outside Jesus' tomb is just ridiculous! What a wonderful and powerful Savior we have!



**MEMORY  
VERSE**

▷ **1 Corinthians 15:3:** Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

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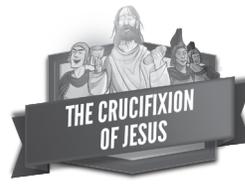
**BIG IDEA**

▷ In the ultimate act of love, Jesus died to save us from sin and death.

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**CLOSING  
PRAYER**

▷ Dear God, we can't thank you enough for sending Jesus to die for our sins. May we think of this forever and live for Him each day! We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 1



It was the festival of Passover. Jesus and His twelve disciples had gathered in a room for their last supper together. Jesus knew it would be their final time to be together before He died, so He told His friends many important things. There was one very important message He had for them: One of the disciples would betray Him.

### SLIDE 2



"The one who betrays me will dip his food in the bowl at the same time I do," said Jesus. And just as He said that, Judas reached over and dipped his food in the bowl. With shock and anger, Judas looked at Jesus. The Son of God knew beforehand that Judas would betray Him and deliver Him over to the chief priests and religious leaders.

### SLIDE 3

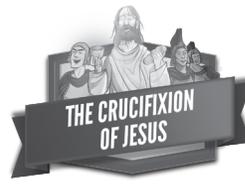


Judas shoved away from the table and scrambled for the door. He didn't look back. He scurried away to do his evil deed. All the other disciples looked on in awe. They could not believe that one of their own was a traitor.

### SLIDE 4



Jesus understood that the hour was soon approaching that He would suffer and die for the sin of all mankind. He told the disciples to remember His death and to think of Him often. He took the bread, gave thanks for it, broke it, and handed it to each of them. He took the cup, gave thanks for it, and shared it with them. He told them to think of the wine as His blood and the bread as His body. The disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying. Peter, one of the disciples, said that he would never leave Jesus. But Jesus quickly told Peter that before that night was over, Peter would deny that he knew Him three times.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 5



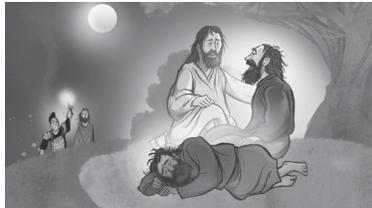
Meanwhile, with the chief priests, Judas carried out his evil deed. He agreed to hand Jesus over to the cruel leaders if they would pay him a lot of money. Of course, Judas knew it was wrong, but there was no turning back now.

### SLIDE 6



By now, it was dark outside. Jesus and His disciples went to a garden. Jesus wanted to prepare for His death, so He fell to His knees, bowed His head, and poured out His heart to His heavenly Father. "Oh, God," He cried, "I don't want to suffer. But I will do what You want Me to." His prayer went on for hours.

### SLIDE 7

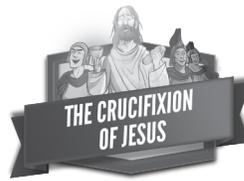


The disciples couldn't stay awake and fell asleep nearby; however, Jesus couldn't sleep, and He stayed awake in prayer. When Jesus came to His disciples, He found them asleep. Even after He woke them and encouraged them to pray, they fell asleep again. The second time, Jesus woke them and told them that the time had come for Him to be arrested. The disciples were confused and did not know what to expect.

### SLIDE 8



A group of armed guards rushed up to Jesus and His disciples. Judas was with them. Judas walked over and kissed Jesus on the cheek—a sign to the soldiers that Jesus was the one they should arrest. The guards grabbed Jesus' arms.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 9



Peter wasn't about to let this happen. He was going to protect Jesus. He pulled out his own sword and slashed at the guards. In doing so, he chopped off the ear of one of the servants.

### SLIDE 10



Jesus rebuked Peter gently. Jesus knew that Peter meant well, but this was all a part of God's plan. Jesus touched the man's ear and completely healed it. The guards were amazed.

### SLIDE 11

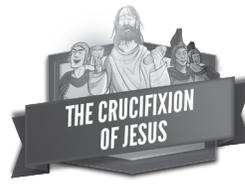


"So, have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a robber?" Jesus asked looking up at His attackers. The guards knew that Jesus had been preaching and teaching in public places and no one ever tried to arrest Him there. This night was different. The disciples were afraid and ran away, but Peter followed Jesus at a distance.

### SLIDE 12



Jesus was led all the way from the Garden of Gethsemane through the Kidron Valley to the high priest. There He was interrogated. They were trying to find a reason to kill Him. Of course, Jesus was honest and true. He simply told them what He had always declared—He was the Son of God. This enraged the leaders. They led Him to another court to obtain permission to put Him to death.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 13



Meanwhile, Peter stood outside in the courtyard around a fire with other bystanders. He wanted to see what happened. "You're His disciple, aren't you?" a servant girl asked him. "No! I'm not!" Peter swore and became angry. "I don't even know Him!" Peter was asked if he knew Jesus three times, and all three times he lied. After Peter lied for the third time, a rooster crowed, and Peter remembered what Jesus had said. He ran away feeling horrible and weeping bitterly.

### SLIDE 14



That night, after Jesus was arrested, Judas realized what he had done and was overcome with guilt. He didn't care about the money that he had earned. He ran to the priests and threw the coins on the floor. Then he ran out, tied a rope around his neck, and hung himself.

### SLIDE 15

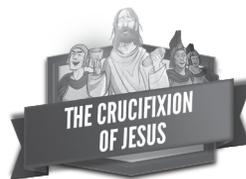


That same night Jesus was on trial before the Roman leader, Pilate. Even Pilate didn't want to kill Jesus. "He hasn't done anything to deserve death!" Pilate said, exasperated. The crowds, whipped into a frenzy by the leaders, just wanted to see some blood. "Crucify Him!" they chanted with maddening anger.

### SLIDE 16



Pilate decided to give in. "I'm going to give you what you want, just to keep the peace. But I have nothing to do with this! I wash my hands of it." The cruel Roman soldiers were only too glad to oblige. Jesus was whipped mercilessly, leaving Him bleeding and wounded.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 17



They mocked Jesus, hailing Him as a king, then they shoved a crown of thorns on His head. They spit at Him, hit Him, slapped Him, and made cruel jokes. Jesus suffered silently and did not retaliate. He knew He was the sacrifice, dying for the sins of the very people who tortured Him.

### SLIDE 18



The time had come. Jesus would be nailed to a cross. He was forced to carry His own heavy cross until He fell from the pain and exhaustion. Jesus was so weak that a man named Simon of Cyrene ended up carrying His cross to Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull.

### SLIDE 19

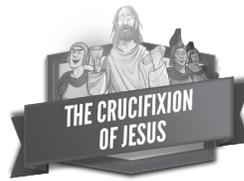


There, at the top of the hill, Jesus was crucified like a criminal. Hanging on a cross for all to see, two thieves hung beside Him. This was no place for the Son of God.

### SLIDE 20



Jesus' hands and feet were nailed to the cross, and then the soldiers hoisted the cross into the air. Pilate had hung a sign above His head that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The religious leaders were furious about this, but Pilate refused to remove the sign. Some people mourned, some mocked, but most people felt great pity for Him. Jesus' own mother was there. Some of Jesus' disciples watched from a distance, afraid and terribly sad. As Jesus hung dying on the cross, the entire land was plunged into darkness, even though it was the middle of the day. With His last breath, Jesus cried out, "It is finished!" Jesus breathed no more. A low rumbling erupted from all around. In Jerusalem's holy temple, the mighty curtain that separated the holiest of holies was torn in half. Many knew in that instant that Jesus was truly the Son of God.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 21



Just before the Sabbath began, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus' body. He prepared it for burial and placed Jesus' body in his own new tomb. He then rolled a large stone in front of the entrance. The religious council knew Jesus said that He would rise again. To make sure no one came to steal Jesus' body to make it look like He had risen from the dead, they stationed guards outside Jesus' tomb. Jesus had to die to appease God's wrath towards sin. But this was not the end. Jesus would be resurrected after three days to defeat death and sin forever.