

LESSON 43

The Ascension

ACTS 1:1-14



BIBLE TRUTH

JESUS LEFT THE EARTH, BUT HE WILL COME AGAIN

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read Acts 1:1–14 from the Scriptures or read story 121, “The Ascension,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **15 MIN**
Helium Ascension
SUPPLIES:
✓ a helium balloon with ribbon
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **15 MIN**
I Will Not Leave You as Orphans
SUPPLIES:
✓ red construction paper
✓ black markers
6. **SWORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **10 MIN**
Color a Picture
SUPPLIES:
✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 43—one for each child
✓ markers or crayons
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
The Promise to the Nations
SUPPLIES:
✓ world map
✓ foam-core board to accommodate the map (if you don’t have access to a bulletin board)
✓ pin with a colored plastic head
✓ highlighter

TOTAL 85 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The book of Acts is part two of the story—Luke is the author of Acts, which is really just a continuation of the gospel he wrote. We have four gospels, but we only have one book of Acts. In his opening, Luke gives a recap of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He mentions that Jesus gave many convincing proofs that he was alive again (Acts 1:3). Many have tried to discredit the resurrection, but it is one of the most documented ancient events, with multiple witnesses. Luke reminds us of Jesus' charge to the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Although Jesus had breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit, they were expecting and waiting for a greater outpouring of the Spirit's power.

Jesus' ascension is the end of part one—Although the ascension is at the beginning of the book of Acts, it is really the conclusion of part one; it concludes Jesus' earthly ministry. Just before Jesus rose up to heaven, the disciples asked the Lord if he was going to restore the kingdom to Israel at that very moment. It was a logical question; Jesus had conquered death, sin, and the devil. God could have brought the fallen world to a close right then and there. But there was another part to the story. Jesus spoke of it in the Great Commission. The disciples were to go into all the earth and spread the gospel message to people of every nation (Matthew 28:19). The end could not come until the gospel blessing spread to all nations. After all, that was God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 18:18). The disciples still seemed confused about what the restored kingdom was all about. It is a good thing for us that Jesus did not restore the kingdom because we wouldn't have been a part of it. Now we get to enjoy everlasting life with God in heaven!

After he answered the disciples, Jesus was taken up while they were watching. Like we might search for a balloon floating up in the sky, the disciples looked intently, hoping to catch another glimpse of the ascending Lord through the clouds.

Waiting for power is how part two begins—While the disciples were still looking up into the sky, two men dressed in white appeared and made a wonderful announcement. Jesus would return one day just as he left! Today, we still look forward to his return. Though it is not for us to know when (Acts 1:7), we should pray for his soon return.

The disciples, realizing the show was over, left the Mount of Olives and returned to the upper room, obeying the last command Jesus had given them: wait (Luke 24:49).

They were joined by Mary, the mother of Jesus, along with his brothers. What a joy it must have been for them to relay the story of Jesus' ascension to Mary. She had an incredible life. She experienced the visit of the first angel, witnessed his miracles, agonized through the suffering of her son, rejoiced at his resurrection, and then learned of his ascension into heaven. This is the last we hear of Jesus' mother, Mary.

Where Is the Gospel? _____

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

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

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

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Acts 1:1–14 from the Scriptures or read story 121, “The Ascension,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

Helium Ascension

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a helium balloon with ribbon

Take your class outside and read the account of the ascension from Acts 1:1–9. Then let the balloon go and have the children watch it until no one can see it any longer. Then read verses 10–11. Tell the children that because the time of Jesus’ return is hidden, we never know when he will appear in the sky. That is why Jesus warned us to always be ready.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESON 2 15 MIN

I Will Not Leave You as Orphans

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ red construction paper
- ✓ black markers

Have each child cut a heart out of red construction paper and write “Jesus—John 14:20” on it with a black marker.

Read John 14:16–20 to the children and remind them that, although Jesus left earth and is in heaven now, he lives in the hearts of all believers through his Spirit. Jesus lives inside the heart of everyone who believes. Have them take the hearts home to remind them of this.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

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

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

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

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

- **What is happening in the picture?**
(Jesus is going up into the clouds, looking down at the disciples.)
- **What do you think it would have been like to see Jesus float up into the sky?**
(Accept any answer.)
- **Where did Jesus go when he was lifted up?**
(Jesus went back to his Father in heaven.)
- **What do we learn about Jesus from this passage?**
(No mere man can simply lift himself up into the heavens. Jesus was all-powerful God who surely defeated death in rising from the dead. He is more than a mere man.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

The Promise to the Nations

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ world map
- ✓ foam-core board to accommodate the map (if you don't have access to a bulletin board)
- ✓ pin with a colored plastic head
- ✓ highlighter

Display the map in your classroom on a bulletin board or on a sheet of foam-core board. Color the nation of Israel with a highlighter and push the pin into Jerusalem.

Read Acts 1:8 to the class and then have them gather round the map. Point out Jerusalem and then explain that Judea and Samaria represent the nation of Israel. Tell them that the whole rest of the earth is what Jesus meant when he said “to the end of the earth.”

Then read Genesis 18:18 and Matthew 28:19 to the children and ask the class how the three Scriptures all fit together. For the answer, see the second teaching point: “Jesus’ ascension is the end of part one.”

If you can, point out a few of the countries that have people groups that still have not heard the gospel message.

LESSON 43 - THE ASCENSION

