

LESSON 35

Jesus Is Arrested

MATTHEW 26:36-56



BIBLE TRUTH

JESUS OFFERED NO RESISTANCE TO ARREST, THAT WE MIGHT BE SAVED

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 Matthew 26:36–56 from the Scriptures or read story 113, “Jesus Is Arrested,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 25 MIN

Replay the Arrest

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles for the class
- ✓ plastic sword and other props, e.g., sheets and towels for costumes with rope belts
(Every child does not need a costume but even a few for the key roles can add to the effect and help the children enter into character.)

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

To Fulfill the Scriptures

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pencils or pens and paper
- ✓ Bibles for the class

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Knocked to the Ground

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Harmonize the Scripture Accounts

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker
- ✓ pencils or pens and paper
- ✓ Bibles for the class

TOTAL 90 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Jesus suffered—In one of the clearest demonstrations of the suffering of Christ on our behalf, Jesus took time to pray at Gethsemane and ask his Father to allow the trial to pass, but only if it was his will (Matthew 26:39). Jesus knew there was no other way to save his people, yet the burden of the sin of man pressed him to cry out in anguish. Jesus told the disciples his sorrow was so great it took him to the point of death (Mark 14:34). Even so, the disciples could not stay awake to pray with the Lord (Mark 14:40). The weakness of man in contrast to the grace of God is clearly portrayed in the failure of the disciples to stay awake to pray with Jesus. The Scripture tells us, “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and deserted—Just as Jesus foresaw, Judas betrayed him (Matthew 26:24). The kiss of Judas was a wicked demonstration of his betrayal but unnecessary, for Jesus identified himself (John 18:5). Yet Judas followed through with his treachery and kissed the one he called Rabbi (Mark 14:45). When the soldiers seized Jesus, Peter unsheathed his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest (John 18:10). Jesus rebuked Peter, then touched the man and healed him (Luke 22:51).

Peter was determined to fight, but did not realize there would be no fighting with swords. Jesus would fight alone. The fight was for our salvation, and the weapon was not a sword, but the cross. Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7) that the Scriptures might be fulfilled (Matthew 26:54). Once the disciples saw Jesus offering no resistance to his arrest, their hope for a restored kingdom was crushed (Luke 24:21), and they fled. Zechariah predicted this when he said, “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered” (Zechariah 13:7).

Jesus stood trial—Jesus was innocent; he was without sin. The rulers came together and brought people to testify against Jesus. But the testimonies did not agree for they were all lies. The chief priest asked Jesus directly, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” Jesus answered, “I am” (Mark 14:61–62). Then he went on to say he, the Son of Man, would come with the clouds of heaven. The high priest, knowing that Jesus was claiming to be God—equal with the Father—tore his clothes and accused Jesus of blasphemy. Jesus was then condemned to die, cruelly beaten, and mocked. The rulers did not realize that everything Jesus said was absolutely true.

Jesus, calling himself the Son of Man, brings together Daniel 7:13–14 and Psalm 110:1. The Son of Man in Daniel is given authority and glory, and all the nations worship him. He is God. Combined with the words “I am,” there is no mistaking Jesus’ claim to be God.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Sanhedrin

The Sanhedrin was the Jewish religious court. Each city had a Sanhedrin made up of the local religious leaders. In Jerusalem, the Great Sanhedrin was run by the acting high priest. It was assembled to try individuals accused of violating Jewish law. Under Roman rule, the Sanhedrin had no legal right to sentence anyone to capital punishment (death). That was something Rome reserved for itself. A meeting of the Sanhedrin was called to discuss the raising of Lazarus (John 11:47). At its conclusion orders were given for Jesus' arrest.

After Jesus' ascension, several of the disciples were brought before this religious court. Stephen was tried before the Sanhedrin. In his defense, Stephen claimed to see the Son of Man in heaven standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:56). This was consistent with what Jesus said before the Sanhedrin in Mark 14:62. It was as though Stephen was affirming that Jesus was who he said he was! This so infuriated the religious leaders that they disregarded the Roman restriction against capital punishment and stoned Stephen on the spot.

Where Is the Gospel? _____

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

Jesus did not call down legions of angels or defend himself. This fulfilled the Scriptures (see Matthew 26:56). Isaiah 53:11 prophesied, "He shall bear their iniquities." The arrest of Jesus was linked to his death, when he bore our sin. When we read of his arrest, we see his willingness to die in our place. This is the greatest demonstration of love in history.

Though Jesus did not defend himself, John records a fascinating glimpse at his authority and power. When Jesus answered the officials, saying, "I am he," the officials drew back and fell to the ground. Something caused them to fall back. Whether it was a momentary wave of shock or simply the command of his voice, we can't help but notice that Jesus' words match those God used to describe himself to Moses. God said, "I am who I am" (Exodus 3:14). These men should have fallen on their faces in worship. Instead they were forced to the ground by the King of Kings in a momentary display of his power.

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 Matthew 26:36–56 from the Scriptures or read story 113, “Jesus Is Arrested,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 25 MIN

Replay the Arrest

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles for the class
- ✓ plastic sword and other props, e.g., sheets and towels for costumes with rope belts (Every child does not need a costume but even a few for the key roles can add to the effect and help the children enter into character.)

Use this exercise to draw attention to Jesus’ words, “I am he” (John 18:5).

First, read together Matthew 26:36–56 and John 18:1–12 to assemble all the details of Jesus’ arrest. (In today’s bonus object lesson you will harmonize all the gospel accounts of Jesus’ arrest, so if you do this now you will have a jump on that exercise.)

Next divide the roles among your students: disciples, officials, Jesus, and Judas. Walk through the arrest and rehearse. When you get to the part where Jesus says “I am he,” the officials and guards should fall to the ground. Have Jesus say these words in a deeper tone, with authority. Don’t worry about memorizing lines. Feed the actors the lines as they go.

Conclude by asking the following questions:

- Did you know that Jesus knocked down the officials with his words?
- What do you think is significant about the words “I am”?
(“I Am” is the name God called himself in his appearance to Moses from out of the burning bush [Exodus 3:14].)

- Did Jesus resist arrest?
(No, he told Peter to put away his sword.)
- Why did Jesus allow himself to be arrested without a fight?
(Jesus willingly offered himself up to be sacrificed on the cross.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

To Fulfill the Scriptures

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pencils or pens and paper
- ✓ Bibles for the class

Read Mark 14:43–50 to the class. Then divide the class into groups of four or five and assign them one of the following Old Testament verses to look up. (More than one group may have the same verse.) Have them write down how Jesus fulfilled the prophecy in their verse, finding a New Testament verse to support their answer. (Help the groups find the New Testament verses.)

1. Psalm 41:9 (Judas, Jesus' friend who broke bread with him at the Last Supper, betrayed him [Matthew 26:25; Mark 14:20].)
2. Zechariah 13:7 (When Jesus was arrested, the disciples fled [Mark 14:50].)
3. Isaiah 53:7 (Jesus did not fight against his arrest [Matthew 26:52–55].)

Gather the groups back together and have each group report on what they discovered. Talk about how amazing it is that the prophets predicted Jesus betrayal and arrest down to the smallest detail of the betrayer breaking bread with Jesus.

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

Knocked to the Ground

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Draw a picture of Jesus standing with all the temple guards knocked to the ground (John 18:5).

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

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

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Harmonize the Scripture Accounts

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker
- ✓ pencils or pens and paper
- ✓ Bibles for the class

Building on what the children learned in the the object lesson, “Replay the Arrest,” harmonize all four Gospel accounts of Jesus’ arrest. Read all four Gospel accounts—Matthew 26:47–56; Mark 14:43–52; Luke 22:47–53; and John 18:2–12. Using the Mark passage as the baseline text, list the information added by the other gospel writers. If you would like, divide the class into three groups, each taking one of the other three Gospels. Then ask them for their findings.

Taking the example of cutting off the servant’s ear, the class will notice that John’s Gospel includes the identity of the man who wielded the sword—Peter (John 18:10). Luke, the physician, adds that Jesus then healed the man’s ear (Luke 22:51). Finally, Matthew adds Jesus’ rebuke and claim that if he wanted to fight, he could call down legions of angels (Matthew 26:53).