

The Crucifixion and Burial of Jesus Christ

Purpose To strengthen each child's testimony that because Jesus died for us, we will live again.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Matthew 27:32–66, Luke 23:26–56, and John 10:17–18, 19:13–42. Then study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the scripture account. (See “Preparing Your Lessons,” p. vi, and “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)
2. Additional reading: Mark 15:20–47.
3. Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will involve the children and best help them achieve the purpose of the lesson.
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible or a New Testament for each child.
 - b. A copy of the Book of Mormon.
 - c. Pictures 7-33, The Crucifixion (Gospel Art Picture Kit 230; 62505); 7-34, Burial of Jesus (Gospel Art Picture Kit 231; 62180); and 7-35, Jesus' Tomb (Gospel Art Picture Kit 232; 62111).

Suggested Lesson Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Attention Activity

Share with the children the following story:

On a cold, wintry day an airplane crashed into a bridge in Washington, D.C., and plunged into the icy Potomac River. Many people were killed, but six people hung on to the plane's tail while men in a helicopter threw them a life preserver. The water was very cold, and it was hard to hang on to the plane. These people were afraid they might die before their turn came to grab the life preserver and be carried to safety.

Every time the rescuers lowered the life preserver to one man, he passed it to someone else so the other person could be rescued first. He did this until everyone else had been rescued, but then he could not hold on any longer. When the helicopter came back to get him, he had slipped under the water. He died before anyone could save him.

- Why do you think this man kept passing the life preserver to others? How would you feel if you had been one of the people this man had saved?

Express your feelings about the courage and love it would take to be able to give your life for others as this man did.

Explain to the children that in this lesson they will learn of Jesus' pain and suffering on the cross. He willingly gave his life so every person who has ever lived, or will ever live, will live again because of his great love for us.

Brief Review	<p>Remind the children of the situation Adam and Eve placed themselves and their posterity in when they ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Because of Adam and Eve's transgression, their bodies became mortal. This meant that their bodies would someday die. As Adam and Eve's posterity, we also are subject to death, as they were.</p> <p>Testify that physical death is part of Heavenly Father's plan and that Heavenly Father, in his great mercy, sent his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to overcome death. Through Christ's death and resurrection, we have all been rescued from physical death. We will die, but we will be resurrected (see John 3:16–17; Helaman 14:15).</p> <p>Briefly review from previous lessons the events of Jesus' suffering, betrayal, arrest, and trial.</p>
Scripture Account	<p>Teach the children the account of Jesus' crucifixion and burial found in Matthew 27:32–66. (For suggested ways to teach the scripture account, see "Teaching from the Scriptures," p. vii.) Also refer to Luke 23:34, 39–43 and John 19:19–22, 25–27, 34, 39. Use the pictures at appropriate times.</p> <p>You might want to refer to the following list to help you teach the points of this lesson:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simon of Cyrene carried Jesus' cross (Matthew 27:32). 2. Jesus was hung on the cross between two thieves (Matthew 27:33–38; Luke 23:32–33). 3. Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross (John 19:19–22). 4. Jesus was mocked (Matthew 27:39–44). 5. Jesus talked to the thief (Luke 23:39–43). 6. Jesus asked John to care for his mother (John 19:25–27). 7. Darkness covered the land (Matthew 27:45–46). 8. Jesus Christ died (Matthew 27:50–56). The Roman soldiers pierced his side (John 19:34). 9. Jesus' body was placed in a tomb (Matthew 27:57–61; John 19:38–42). 10. Guards were sent to watch the tomb (Matthew 27:62–66).
Discussion and Application Questions	<p>Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. Use the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles in their lives. Reading the references with the children in class will help them gain insights into the scriptures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After Jesus' trial, what did Pilate do? (Matthew 27:26.) What does <i>scourge</i> mean? (To whip.) What does <i>crucify</i> mean? (To put to death by nailing or binding the hands and feet to a cross.) Explain that crucifixion was a slow and painful death usually reserved for slaves and the lowest criminals. • By what two names is the place where Jesus was crucified known? (Matthew 27:33; Luke 23:33.) • Who was Jesus crucified with? (Matthew 27:38; Luke 23:33.) • What did the soldiers give Jesus to drink? (Matthew 27:34.) Explain that vinegar and gall were given as a medicine to help deaden the senses or ease

the pain. Help the children understand that Jesus refused to drink the mixture because he wanted to be fully conscious and aware as he finished the work of the Atonement.

- Whom did Jesus ask Heavenly Father to forgive? (Luke 23:34, footnote c in the LDS edition of the Bible.) Why do you think it was important that Jesus forgave the soldiers? Why is it important that we be forgiving? How are we blessed when we forgive others?
- Who were some of those who mocked and reviled (insulted) Jesus while he hung on the cross? (Matthew 27:39–44.) What were some of the things they said to him? How did Jesus respond? (1 Nephi 19:9.) How should we respond when people say mean things to us?
- How did the two thieves react to Jesus? (Luke 23:39–43.) What did the second thief say that showed he was beginning to repent? (Luke 23:40–42.) What was Jesus' reply? (Luke 23:43.)
- How did Jesus show great love for his mother while suffering on the cross? (John 19:25–27.) What does this teach us about Jesus?
- How long did the darkness cover the land? (Matthew 27:45.) What did Jesus cry out? (Matthew 27:46.) Had God really forsaken his Son? Explain that Heavenly Father had withdrawn his spirit for a time so that Jesus could complete his victory over sin and death by himself.
- What does it mean that Jesus “yielded up the ghost”? (The only way Jesus could die was to let his spirit leave his body. The scripture confirms that he gave up his life willingly; it was not taken from him.) Have the children read John 10:17–18. Why do you think Jesus was willing to give up his life?
- What miraculous events happened at the time of Jesus' death? (Matthew 27:51–53.) What does “rent in twain” mean? (Torn in half.) What testimony did the centurion (an officer of the Roman army) offer when he saw what happened? (Matthew 27:54.)
- Who was Joseph of Arimathea? (Matthew 27:57.) What did he do? (Matthew 27:58–60.)
- What did the Pharisees ask Pilate to do? (Matthew 27:62–66.) Why did they want the sepulchre guarded? Why did their efforts make no difference? What does this teach us about the power of men and the power of the Lord?

Summary
Discussion and
Application
Questions

You might use the following questions to help the children understand the relationship between Adam and Eve's transgression and the need for a Savior.

- How did Adam and Eve transgress one of Heavenly Father's commandments in the Garden of Eden? (They ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.) What was the result of this transgression? (They had to leave the Garden. They became mortal and could have children. They and all their posterity became subject to death. This was part of Heavenly Father's plan.)
- What happens to our bodies and spirits when we die? (The spirit leaves the body and goes to the spirit world; the body, lifeless without the spirit, is usually buried in the earth.) What could we do to reunite our bodies and spirits? (Nothing; because we are mortal, we do not have the power to reunite our bodies and spirits by ourselves.)

- Who made it possible for us to overcome this hopeless situation? Why was Jesus the only one who could save us? (He was sinless; he was Heavenly Father's Only Begotten Son in the flesh and had power over death.) How does it make you feel to know that there was someone who could help you and your family be resurrected?

Enrichment Activities

You may use one or more of the following activities any time during the lesson or as a review, summary, or challenge.

1. List the following scriptures on a chart or on the chalkboard. Tell the children that each scripture contains one of the recorded statements that Jesus made while hanging on the cross. Have the children read the statements and tell what power or character trait helped Jesus say or do these things.

Luke 23:34 (He was merciful and forgiving.)

Luke 23:43 (He had power to foretell what would happen.)

John 19:26–27 (He had love and concern for his mother.)

Matthew 27:46 (He expressed his dependence on his Father.)

Luke 23:46 (He was submissive to Heavenly Father's will.)

Matthew 27:50, footnote a (He had fulfilled Heavenly Father's plan.)

2. List on the chalkboard these names of people or groups of people mentioned in the scripture account of Jesus' death and burial. Ask the children what they remember about each person or group. Help the children identify the part that each took:

Jesus Christ

Pilate

Simon of Cyrene

Soldiers

Mockers

Two thieves

Mary, the mother of Jesus

John the Beloved

The centurion

Joseph of Arimathea

3. Discuss and help the children memorize the second article of faith.
4. Sing or read the words to "He Died That We Might Live Again" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 65) or "Did Jesus Really Live Again?" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 64).

Conclusion

Testimony

Express your gratitude for the great sacrifice Jesus made for us in dying on the cross. Bear testimony that we will be resurrected and live again because of his great love for us.

Suggested Home Reading

Suggest that the children study Matthew 27:34–50 at home as a review of this lesson.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.