

BINLE TIMELINE ASSEMBLIES

44. The Road To Emmaus

Bible Base: Luke 24: 13-35

Key Christian Belief: Jesus is king forever.

Aim: To show that Jesus died and rose again in accordance with God's plan.

Introduction

Have you ever met someone you should have known - but you didn't recognise them? (Give a personal example, if possible.)

Display the distorted images from the PowerPoint slides, one by one, and see if the children can recognise in each case whose image it is.

Explain that today you are going to tell the children a story from the Bible about two friends who were talking with someone they knew but didn't recognise.

Story

As you tell the story, walk slowly from one side of the stage (Jerusalem) to the other (Emmaus). Have a seat and a table with bread on it at the 'Emmaus' end. As you tell the relevant part of the story, sit at the table facing the audience. Then run all the way back to 'Jerusalem' to tell the last part of the story.

Two friends were walking along the road on their way from the big city of Jerusalem to their home in a little village called Emmaus, six miles away. It was teatime and the sun was beginning to set in the sky behind them. They both shook their heads sadly as they walked along the road talking to each other.

Just then another traveller came up from behind and greeted them. They turned round to see who the man was but the sun was in their eyes and they couldn't see him properly. (Display the slide with the silhouette on it.)

He asked them what they were talking about.

'We've been talking about what has happened to Jesus' they replied.

'Jesus?' said the stranger. 'Who's he?'

'Where on earth have you been?' exclaimed the two friends. 'Everyone in Jerusalem has been talking about him. He was a teacher who travelled around our country teaching people about God and doing many amazing things. We thought he would one day be our king and help us get rid of the Romans who have taken over our country. Our prophets have been telling us for centuries that God will one day send a new king to rescue His people and we thought Jesus might even have been the one - but he can't have been.'

'Why not?' asked the stranger.

'Because now he's dead' the friends blurted out sadly. 'Our leaders didn't like some of the things Jesus taught and they especially didn't like the people he chose to hang around with. They had him arrested a few days ago, made up some lies about him and handed him over to the Roman governor - who sentenced him to be put to death on a

cross. His body was buried on Friday evening. And to make matters worse some of our women friends went to visit the place where he was buried this morning and they say his body isn't there any more. We don't know what to make of it all.'

'Why are you so surprised?' said the stranger. 'Weren't you expecting this to happen?'

And the stranger began to explain, reminding them of what their Scriptures - what we would call the Old Testament - said about the new king that God had promised.

'Haven't you read what Isaiah says about him?' said the stranger. 'That the punishment we deserve would be given to him, that he would suffer and die in order to complete the work that God had given Him to do and that afterwards He would see life again?'

'Well yes' said the friends 'we have read those words often, but we didn't think it meant that God's promised king would have to die - and surely dead people don't come back to life again, do they? Some of our women friends did say they had seen angels who told them that Jesus was alive, but you know what women are like! They'd believe anything! We told them they were seeing things. Jesus died and was buried. He can't be alive again. The whole thing is impossible.'

The stranger just smiled. By now the two friends had arrived at their village and the stranger went to continue on his way.

'Where are you going at this time of night?' asked the two friends. 'It will be dark soon and it's not safe out on the roads at night time. Why not come and stay with us until the morning - and then you can set off on your journey again.'

'That's very kind of you' said the stranger and he followed them to their house. Once inside they all sat down at a small table. The two friends offered their guest some bread to eat. He took a piece and broke it and just as he did, a candle flickered into life and for the first time the two friends saw exactly who they had been talking to. (Display the slide with the picture of Jesus on it.) It was Jesus!

They could hardly believe their eyes. But the moment they recognised him, Jesus disappeared. (Display the blank slide.) The two friends immediately ran all the way back to Jerusalem and found some of Jesus friends in an upstairs room with the door locked.

'Let us in!' they shouted. 'We've seen Jesus - He is alive!'

'Nonsense' said their friends. But no sooner had they said it than somehow or other Jesus was in the room with them all. (Display the slide with the picture of Jesus on it.)

'It's a ghost!' said his followers.

'Come over and touch my hands' said Jesus. 'You can't touch a ghost, can you?'

Then he lifted a piece of fish and ate it. 'And ghosts don't eat fish, do they?'

It was Jesus - He was really and truly alive.

'Now go and tell everyone the Good News' said Jesus. 'And remember - I will be with you always!'

Exploring Christian Belief

Slowly, in the days that followed, Jesus friends began to realise that they did have Good News to share. When Jesus died on the cross it wasn't an accident or a mistake - it had all been part of God's plan. And now God had raised Him to life again to show that He really is the king that He had promised to send.

But now for the first time they understood that He had come not to rescue the people of Israel from the Romans but to rescue all of us from the wrong things that are in our lives and in our world. The Bible says He had come not just to be king over one country for a short period of time but to be king over all God's people forever. Christians believe that because of what He has done for us, if we choose to accept Him as our King, we can be sure that our sins are all forgiven, that He will be with us always, and that one day we will be with Him in His forever kingdom!

Reflection and Prayer

Invite the children to imagine what the perfect king would do for His people and what it would be like to live in the perfect kingdom. Thank God that Jesus is our perfect king and that He has made it possible for us to live with Him in His perfect kingdom forever!