

## BIBLE TIME LINE ASSEMBLIES

### 61. JESUS AND THE MAN BORN BLIND

Bible Base: John 9: 1-41

Key Christian Belief: Jesus came to help us see.

Aim: To show that Jesus wants us to see who He really is.

You will need:

- the attached PowerPoint presentation

#### Introduction

Play the Specsavers ad from the attached PowerPoint and talk about how important it is to be able to see clearly. (Share a story of your own to illustrate this if you can.)

Talk about how poor vision can be corrected these days and about how opticians test someone's eyes to see what strength of lenses they will need to help them see clearly.

Ask the children what else is needed, as well as good eyesight, in order to be able to see clearly? Point out that light is also needed. We need both light AND good eyesight in order to see. No matter how well our eyes are working, we can't see anything if it is dark. No matter how bright the sun is, we can't see anything if our eyes aren't working.

Our story today is about someone who lived in the time of Jesus and who couldn't see at all - because he was blind. In those days that meant that he could not get a job to earn money for food - so instead he had to sit all day, every day by the roadside and beg.

#### Story

Either tell the story using the pictures from the attached PowerPoint presentation or choose volunteers to act out the story as below.

*Choose volunteers to act as the blind man, his parents, his neighbours, Jesus and some Pharisees. Have the blind man sit in the centre of the stage with a cap or begging bowl in front of him. Have the man's neighbours off to one side and the Pharisees off to the other. Ask those playing Jesus and the man's parents to wait off stage until they are needed. Then ask all your volunteers to act out the story as you tell it.*

One day, as Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been born blind. (*Enter Jesus.*) Jesus went up to him, spat on the ground, made some mud and rubbed it gently on the man's eyes. Then He told him to go and wash in a nearby pool. The blind man made his way slowly to the pool. (*Jesus leaves the stage. The blind man moves slowly to the front of the stage, kneels down and pretends to wash his face.*) All of a sudden he jumped up excitedly and ran over to his neighbours shouting 'I can see! I can see!'

'Is this the man who used to sit by the roadside and beg?' some of his neighbours asked.

'It can't be him' others said. 'How could someone who was blind suddenly be able to see? This must just be someone who looks like him.'

'No - it's me!' said the man who had been healed.

'But how did you get your sight back?' they asked.

‘The man named Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes’ he answered. ‘Then he told me to go to the nearby pool and wash. So I went and washed, and now I can see.’

‘Where is this man?’ his neighbours asked.

‘I don’t know’ he answered.

So they took the man to the Pharisees and he told them the same story. (*The neighbours take the blind man over to the Pharisees.*) ‘Jesus made some mud, put it on my eyes and told me to wash in the nearby pool. So I did - and now I can see!’

‘Impossible!’ said the Pharisees. ‘This man Jesus is a sinner. He can’t possibly make blind people see. He could only do that if He had come from God. And we know He hasn’t come from God because He doesn’t keep our rules.’

So they sent for the man’s parents. (*The neighbours go get the man’s parents and bring them over to the Pharisees.*)

‘Your boy was never really blind at all, was he?’ the Pharisees said. ‘He was just pretending to be blind so he could trick us into believing that Jesus healed him.’

‘No - he was born blind’ insisted the man’s parents.

‘Well how come he can see now?’ asked the Pharisees.

‘We don’t know’ said his parents. ‘He’s a big boy now - ask him and he’ll tell you.’

‘Come now’ said the Pharisees to the man who had been born blind. ‘Stop all this nonsense. Jesus is a sinner. He couldn’t possibly have given you back your sight.’

‘I don’t know whether he is a sinner or not. The only thing I know is that I was blind and now I can see. And it seems to me that if Jesus weren’t from God He couldn’t have given me back my sight. It’s obvious. He must have come from God.’

‘Nonsense’ said the Pharisees and they threw him out of their meeting place angrily.

Later that day, Jesus found the man again.

‘Do you believe in the One God has sent?’ He asked.

‘Who is He?’ asked the blind man.

‘I am the One’ said Jesus.

‘Lord, I believe’ said the blind man and he knelt down to worship Jesus.

‘I came to help blind people see’ said Jesus ‘but some people prefer to remain blind!’

### **Exploring Christian Belief**

Jesus gave this blind man back his sight. Now he was able to see for the very first time. But Jesus had helped him to ‘see’ in another way too.

When you can't understand something and someone explains it to you, you might say 'Oh I see!' You don't mean that your eyes have started working again - you mean that you now understand something that you didn't understand before.

Because of what Jesus did for the blind man he had come to 'see' that Jesus was God's Son, the one God had sent to rescue His people and to reign forever.

The Bible says that Jesus came to help us 'see' in that way too. He told His followers that He had come to be the 'light of the world'. Just as light helps us to see what there is around us and find our way to wherever we want to go, so Jesus came to help us 'see' what God is really like and how to live as His friends - so that we can find our way safely through our lives and be with Him in heaven forever some day.

However, if we want to see, we need to open our eyes. No matter how much light there is around us, if we keep our eyes shut we won't see a thing. And that is what the Pharisees were doing. They wouldn't believe that Jesus was who He said He was. It was like they had shut their eyes to the light that Jesus had come to bring.

The blind man in our story was blind because he *couldn't* see. The Pharisees were blind because they *wouldn't* see. They refused to accept the truth that Jesus came to bring them. They had made up their minds that Jesus could not possibly have come from God and nothing would convince them otherwise.

The Bible says that Jesus came to help us 'see' the truth about God and find our way safely to be with Him in heaven. Christians believe that he wants us to 'open our eyes' to the truth He came to bring us. He wants us at least to be ready to allow Him to show us who He is. And once we have 'seen' who He is He wants us to listen to what He says and follow Him. Otherwise, He says, it is as if we are walking around with our eyes shut - and that's a very dangerous thing to do.

### **Prayer**

Finish with a prayer asking God to open the children's eyes so that they can 'see' who Jesus really is and believe the Good News of God's love that He came to bring.