



False Accused

Matthew 26:57-68
Mark 14:53-65
Luke 22:54
John 18:13-14,19-24

Trial & Crucifixion

**The story of the arrest, trial, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are so expansive that this lesson only covers a small portion of the story of the redemption that Jesus provided for us on the cross. The focus of this lesson covers the trial of Jesus by the high priest and chief leaders of the synagogue. It does not cover Peter's denial or the trial by Pontius Pilate. Peter's denial, the trial of Pilate, and the crucifixion will be covered in later lessons. However, please see the note near the end of this lesson to cover an overview of the events of the trial and crucifixion of Christ. The children need to be reminded of this during the Easter season, and different details will be covered in later lessons.*

This lesson begins after the arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. They laid hold of Jesus and took him to the palace of the high priest. This is interesting; he did not commit a crime that was identifiable by a true wrong. He was being judged by the laws of the Jews, and it was the leaders of the temple that were accusing him; this would be like church leaders putting a person on trial today.

They brought Jesus to the home of high priest and all the chief priests and elders and scribes were there. Peter followed, but at a distance. He went into the palace and sat with the servants to watch what would happen. He sat with them and warmed himself by the fire.

Discuss: What would you do? Would you follow like Peter did and hope that no-one noticed you?
Would you go home and hide?

The high priest asked Jesus about his disciples, and about his doctrine. Jesus told them that he spoke openly. He taught in the synagogue and in the temple and he did not do anything secretly, meaning he was not conspiring to do anything; he was very open about everything he said. Then he told the priest not to ask him, but to ask those who heard him because they know what he said.

Then one of the officers struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, and said, "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" And Jesus said, "If I said something wrong, then testify to what is wrong.

But if what I said is true, why did you strike me? "

Remember that in all the lessons that were studied about Jesus and his miracles, that the Pharisees and Jews were always trying to catch Jesus doing something wrong. They were constantly looking for a way to condemn him, for him to do something that they could use as evidence to put him on trial - and kill him. They have been searching for evidence against him for quite a long time.

Discuss: They hated him.
If someone is hated, it is common that people will misconstrue or misunderstand what they are trying to say - on purpose.
They will try to twist everything that person says to make it sound like that person has bad intentions.





False Accused

So the chief priests and elders, and all the council tried to find false witness against Jesus - people who would lie about him - so they could sentence him to death. They found people who would witness against him, but their stories did not agree with one another so they were not credible witnesses.

Discuss: If you have two people telling stories, they would at least need to agree to make it believable. If their stories were too far off, then you would not be able to use their witnesses. In a fair trial, you would realize that their stories were not completely true and the testimony would be considered unreliable. But this was not a fair trial.

Finally, they got two false witnesses. And one said, we heard this man say that he would destroy the temple of God, the temple that was made with hands, and build it again in three days (a temple that is made without hands.)

What Jesus actually said was in John 2:19-22. The Jews had been asking Jesus for a sign - they were always asking him for a sign. And he said, destroy the temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But he was talking about his body as the temple and his death and resurrection. And after he resurrected from the dead, the disciples remembered what he had said.

But even the stories of these witnesses did not agree. But the high priest stood up and said, Don't you have an answer to what these men are testifying against you? But Jesus stayed silent. Then the high priest said, "By the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

Then Jesus answered, "You have said.....you will see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Luke's gospel says,

"After this you will see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God."

This outraged the priest. But to know why, the reader needs to go back to the Old Testament book of Daniel. Daniel 7:13 prophesies of the "son of man" coming on the clouds and being presented to the Ancient of Days. This has been interpreted to mean that the human like figure (Jesus) would come on the clouds of heaven and be presented to God the Father.

The priests, elders, and scribes knew these prophecies. That is why in Luke 22:70 they *all* said,

"Are you then the Son of God?" To which Jesus responded, "You say that I am."

And they are OUTRAGED. The high priest ripped his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy, do we need further witnesses? We heard it out of his own mouth."

That was it. That sealed his fate, and they decided at that moment they had what they needed to condemn him to death. To them, this was complete blasphemy.

Then they began discussing it, asking one another what they thought. They decided he was guilty and they condemned him to be guilty of death. They mocked him, and hit him. They blindfolded him, and hit him on the face and said, "Prophecy, who hit you?" They made fun of him, spoke many lies and blasphemed about him.





Falsely Accused

Discuss: Have you had someone lie about you? Did you defend yourself? Jesus is sentenced to death for things he did not do.

At this time there was a unique system of government in Israel. The Romans ruled over Israel, but allowed the Jews to govern themselves on their own matters. The leaders of the synagogue ruled over matters relating to the Mosaic law and other temple laws. The Romans allowed an Israelite leader to rule over the Jews, but he also was subject to the Roman Empire. So although the Jews were allowed to govern over their own issues, they did not have the authority to condemn people to death. If they wanted to give the death sentence, the command had to be executed by the authority of the Roman government.

Discuss: Explain the governmental system of Israel at the time of Jesus using relevant examples to help the audience understand how this would have been structured.

After the high priest decided that he was guilty of death, they did not have the authority to actually sentence Jesus to death. The chief priests had to send Jesus to the Roman leader of this area to determine the validity of the claims and execute the sentence.

They tied Jesus up and took him to Pilate, who was the Roman leader in Jerusalem.

Pilate was reluctant to judge Jesus, and encouraged the Jews to judge him according to their laws. But the Jews told Pilate that they did not have the authority to put anyone to death, and they were determined to see Jesus put to death. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, the leader of the Jews, and Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate.

Ultimately he was condemned to die and he died and suffered on the cross.

The details of the trial of Pilate, the interactions between Pilate and Herod, as well as the details of the crucifixion will be covered in later lessons on the topic of Easter.

Review the following points briefly with the students so that they will have an overview of the Easter story and the trial and crucifixion. Follow this lesson with a lesson on the resurrection.

Briefly discuss:

1. The Last Supper: Jesus washed the disciples feet, told them of his death and betrayal.
2. The prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and arrest.
3. Denial by Peter
4. The trial by the high priest.
5. The trial by Pilate and scourging.
6. The carrying of the cross and crucifixion of Christ.



Jesus in the Story



Jesus did not sin. He never did any wrong. The people said he was guilty of things he did not do, and they crucified him as if he did terrible things. He did not try to defend himself, but remained silent. (1 Peter 2:22-23; Hebrews 4:15)

God put the sins of the whole world on Jesus, and turned his back on Jesus at the cross. After Jesus died and rose again, God gave righteousness to all those who believe in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Jesus never defended himself. He remained silent. He could have argued that he had done nothing wrong.

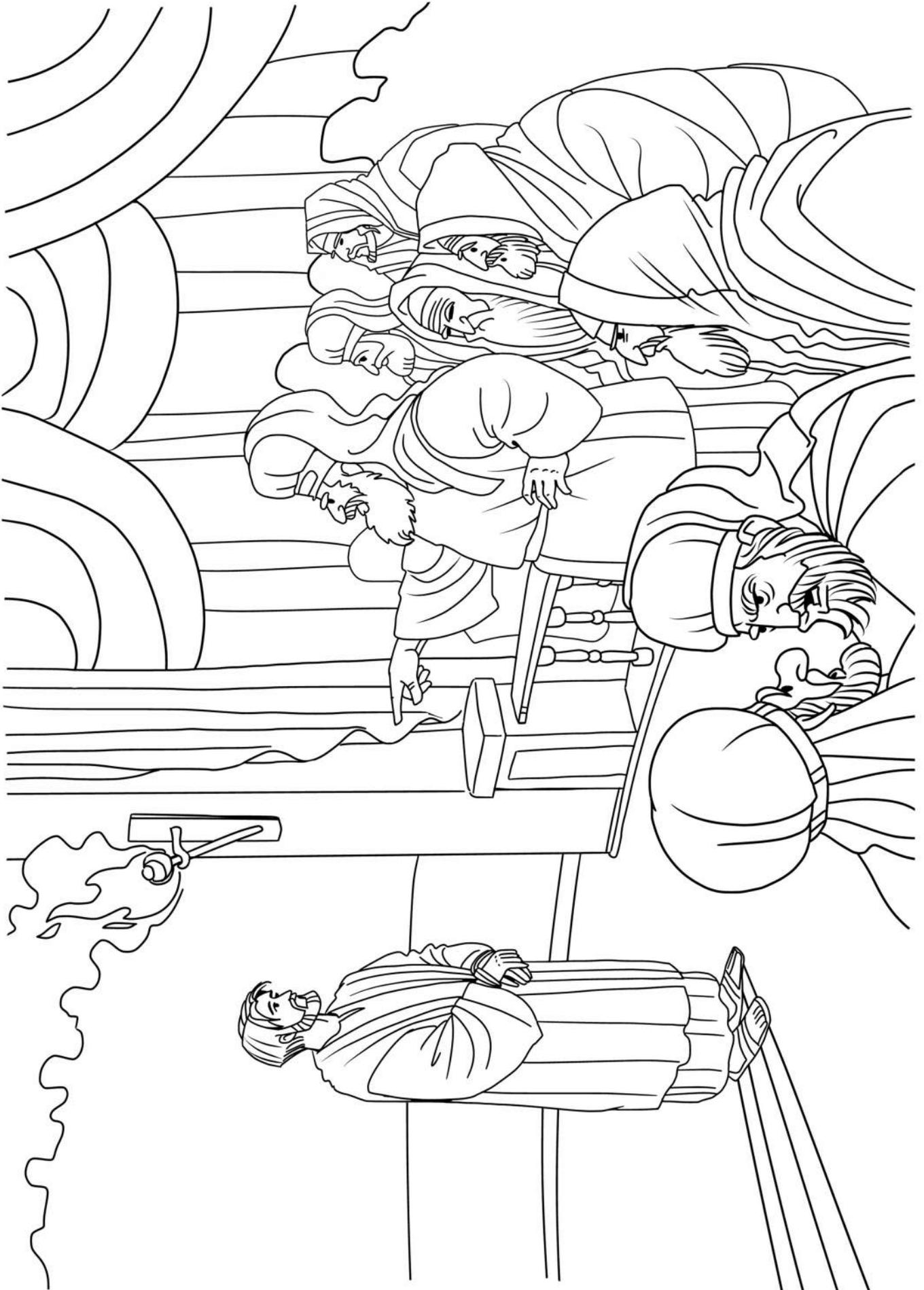
He knew that if he did not die, he would not be able to save all the people from their sins. (Galatians 1:4)

Jesus had to become a man in order to save mankind. In the very beginning, God gave the rule, or dominion, of the earth to men. But then everything was changed through sin.

Jesus came to fulfill prophecy. When he told the priests and elders that he would come on the clouds, he was referring to Daniel 7:13. He was making the claim that he was "the son of man". He would come on the clouds and be presented to the Father.

Jesus was completely man, but also completely God; he was both. This was the only way this could work; he had to come as both man and God to die for the sins of everyone. When people believe in him, God sees those people as righteous, as though they had not done anything wrong. When we believe in our hearts that Jesus died for us and accept what he did, we are saved. (John 1:1,14; Romans 10:9)





Lesson Questions & Memory Verses

45. Falsely Accused

1. Have you ever been accused of something you did not do?
2. Did you think it was unfair?
3. What does Matthew 5:44 say to do to people who hate you and despise you?

1 John 3:4-5

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

46. When the Rooster Crows

1. In Mark 14:30, how many times did Jesus say the rooster would crow?
2. In Mark 14:70, why did they think Peter was with Jesus?
3. In Matthew 26:75 and Luke 22:62 what did Peter do after the rooster crowed?
4. In John 21, how many times did Jesus ask Peter if he loved him?

Romans 5:20

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.

47. Crucify Him!

Read Matthew 27:11-26; Mark 15:6-11

1. What was the first question that Pilate asked Jesus?
2. What would the governor do for the Jewish people at this feast?
3. Who was Barabbas?
4. What did Pilate's wife say?
5. What did Pilate do in front of all the people? (Matthew 27:24)

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent so he opened not his mouth.

48. King of the Jews

Read John 19:17-42

1. What did Pilate write on the sign they placed over the head of Jesus on the cross?
2. Why were the priests upset about what he wrote?
3. When they pierced the side of Jesus, what came out?
4. Who came to take the body of Jesus, and who else came with spices to anoint the body?

John 3:14-15

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

