



Be glad

Aim of lesson

To show that Jesus was in God's plan as Saviour right from the time of the fall; that God knew that man would reject him and that in his mercy he made a way for man to repent (turn around) and come to him.

Preparation required

Provide a flipchart or a sheet of lining paper stuck up on the wall to write down ideas suggested by the class.

Bible background

Genesis 3:15

Outline of lesson

Remind the class about last week's lesson in particular Genesis 3:15.

Make sure the students understand what the verse means; that right from the start God was providing a way for man to be saved from his predicament and that Jesus was to be the Saviour.

Look at Matthew 1:21 to show what God's purpose was in sending Jesus.

Explain that you are going to look at what they know of Jesus identifying aspects relating to his being our saviour. Obviously you will be able to identify other aspects as you talk.

On a flip chart or large sheet of paper make three columns headed Saviour, King and Man. Get the class to brainstorm about Jesus. As they suggest facts get them to say which column it should go in.

Ideas which may come out include: son of God (king?); mother was Mary a virgin (man); born in a stable (man); grew up as Joseph's son (man); learned how to be a carpenter (man); knew a lot about God even as a boy (man); was baptized by John the Baptist (man); controlled the wind and waves (king); preached all around Israel about kingdom of God (saviour); healed the sick (saviour); performed miracles (saviour); brought people back to life (saviour); rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (king); died on a cross (man); was raised (saviour);

Talk about why certain aspects of Jesus's ministry are more appropriate under their respective headings but don't spend too long discussing it. It may not be clear which column to use or there may be overlap. You might need to keep a list of 'not sure' suggestions. Or you may decide to add other categories such as prophet and priest. The important thing is that the students start to think about how Jesus fulfilled the promise of Genesis. Get the students to look at the circles in their books. Some Bibles will explain that Jesus means saviour and Messiah and Christ both mean anointed one - or they could use a concordance. Depending upon their maturity they could annotate some or all of their answers explaining what it means to us. For instance,

- Saviour - God sent him to save us from death because of Adam's sin.
- Anointed¹ one - he is appointed by God
- A man - he can understand us.
- A prophet - Jesus shows us about God.

Talk about what the people in Israel were expecting in Jesus. Mostly they were expecting a king but a king who would save them from the Romans. Think about how Jesus' actual role of saviour and king was so much more far reaching than what they were expecting. Why didn't Jesus become king of Israel straightaway? Try to help them arrive at the understanding that it was because then all the people that lived after him (including us) would have a chance to be saved by him and that this is how his roles as saviour and king link up.

You could mention that the people would have gained their knowledge from their scriptures which was the Old Testament but lesson 7 will cover this in more detail. However you could point out that God had predicted his son's life thousands of years before he was born even to his preaching and what might seem like minor details of his crucifixion (Isaiah 6:1-2, Psalm 22:6-8, 16-18).

¹ Priests (like Aaron, Exodus 40:13-15), prophets (like Elisha, 1 Kings 19:16) and kings (like David, 1 Samuel 16:13) were sometimes - maybe always - anointed in Old Testament times. See also Luke 4:18, Acts 4:26-27 and Acts 10:38.

Relevance to our lives

Romans 5:12-25 sums up Jesus role as saviour. It is a difficult passage to understand but you could go through it with the class picking out odd verses (maybe 12, 15, and 18) to get to the nub of what it means for us.

If Jesus is the saviour of mankind and God had planned for him to come but not to be king until we had the chance to choose to be saved then we should think about it (and perhaps do something about it?)!

Extension activities

- You could talk about other 'saviours' - like Superman, Aslan or Frodo, for instance. How do these match up to Jesus? Does the fact that books and films like this are made, mean that mankind really does recognise the need for a saviour?
- You could talk about how God instituted the idea of sacrifice when he made garments for Adam and Eve. This also was to prefigure the life and death of Jesus.