



### Aim of lesson

To think about the fulfilment of God's plan to save mankind from sin and our response to Jesus' death and resurrection.

### Bible background

Isaiah 53; James 1:13-15; John 3:16; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Peter 2:22-25; Acts 2:24; Romans 6:3-4.

### Preparation required

This lesson draws together threads from several previous lessons so it would be helpful to look back at lessons 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 22.

### Outline of lesson

You might like to start by getting the class to read Isaiah 53 or just to consider verses 4-6 which are printed in their books. Ask the students what this is all about. You don't want to destroy the beauty of the passage so try to keep it simple. They may remember much of this from previous lessons.

The references listed under Bible background above will help the class to summarise what Isaiah 53 is saying and think about what it means. They are printed in the students' books or you could print them onto cards and have them on the table for the class to think about. As they make statements build up a summary on a large sheet of paper. They could copy it into the students' books when they are happy about what it is saying. If they really get the message their summary could end up something like the one below, but they should write what they understand in their own words, even if it is incomplete.:

- We die because our human nature leads us to sin (James 1:13-15), and we are powerless to solve this problem. (Romans 3:12,23; Hebrews 10:3-4)
- God in his love<sup>1</sup> sent his son to provide us with a way of escape (John 3:14-17).
- Jesus not only went through life without sinning, but he also conquered his tendency to sin (Hebrews 2:14-15, 4:15, 1 Peter 2:22-23).
- Although he didn't deserve death he allowed himself to be crucified, bearing our sins and dying for us (Isaiah 53:4-6,12; Galatians 1:4).
- God raised him from the dead to complete the victory over sin and death (Acts 2:24; Philippians 2:9-11).
- In this way Jesus made a way for us to follow. When we repent and are baptised we follow in Jesus' footsteps, passing through death to life (Romans 6:3-5).

The students' attempts may be something like:

- We all do wrong things since Adam and Eve ate the fruit.
- Jesus didn't do anything wrong but he was crucified by the Romans,
- ...

An awesome thought is that Jesus also knew – perhaps from the age of 12 – what was to happen to him and yet he went on being kind, with all the awfulness of his coming death on his mind. He willingly accepted his responsibility as God's son but spent his whole life thinking of other people. Even at the end he was still putting other people before himself. The students might like to think of occasions round the crucifixion when he put others first like Luke 22:49-51; 23:34; John 17:6-11 and 19:26-27.

Get the students to think how we feel when we are accused of something we haven't done. This is nothing compared with a righteous man bearing the sins of the world.

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<sup>1</sup> If you use the NIV Study Bible you may like to avoid a misunderstanding. In several places (Romans 3:25 is one) the notes paint a picture of an angry God demanding that sin be punished, and then being appeased by punishing Jesus instead of us. Were this true it would be a great injustice, and would do nothing to solve the problem of our sins. The truth is that a loving God, seeing our hopeless plight, provided Jesus as one to whom we could come and find mercy, forgiveness and new life. The word 'propitiation' in the AV of Romans 3:25 is only used in one other place in the New Testament: in Hebrews 9:5 it is used to refer to the mercy seat in the tabernacle; the place where man could find God, and where atonement was made. This is the distinction that Christadelphians make between Jesus dying as our substitute (which is what the notes in the NIV Study Bible teach), and our representative (which is what the Bible teaches), and it makes all the difference to our understanding of the death of the Lord Jesus.

## **Relevance to our lives**

So where does this leave us? If we had been around at the time of Jesus death and seen the terrible things that happened to him and been able to realise that he gave himself for us, we would have been so moved and grateful that we would want to follow his example.

These days are days of grace – time to think about what has been done for us and to consider our ways before Jesus comes, this time as an immortal world King.

## **Extension Activities**

- Who Moved the Stone by Frank Morrison is a very powerful corroboration of the resurrection of Jesus and would be worth discussing if any of the class needs convincing that it really happened, or wants reassurance.
- If the students are not yet tired of timelines they could notice that this message spanned the whole of the Old Testament (see the quotation from Luke 24:44) and all the New Testament as well.