

A Good Shepherd
Story of Jesus

Jesus Is Put On Trial

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INTRODUCTION TO LENT

The season of Lent is another "waiting time". The Good Shepherd program makes it easy for children to see the time pass as they prepare to experience Easter.

The stage is set for Lent by using a series of seven cards. The first six cards are purple with one side showing a blackened silhouette and the seventh card is white with one side showing a blackened silhouette. Each week the cards are removed from the Lent basket and laid out in a straight line to your left with the solid side facing upward. As each week's story is shared, the card is turned over. The first week the purple card with the silhouette symbolizing the story of "Waving Palms" is revealed. The second week that card and the one with the silhouette symbolizing the story of "The Tax Collector and the Pharisee" are revealed. And so on. Each week we begin with card one, asking the children to mentally recall each part of the Lent story, before telling the current week's story.

During the story response time, the children are encouraged to take the Lent basket and the story basket from the shelf and see if they can tell the story each week. By using the Lent cards and the story figures the children look ahead with great anticipation to the joy and wonder of Easter.

Each lesson in the Lent series tells you which story, story figures and Lent cards are to be used. During the "circle of light" be sure to place the appropriate bookmark representing each week's story in the Good Shepherd classroom Bible. This allows the children, non-readers as well as readers, to become familiar with where the Lent stories are found in the Bible.

During this time called Lent we learn a lot about Jesus, the stories he told and the things he did. We learn about his relationships with his friends and the people who followed him. The message of Lent is heard as we gradually begin to understand that Jesus showed himself to be the Messiah.

MATERIALS USED DURING LENT--- YEAR THREE

The medium Lent basket on the shelf contains:

- a set of 7 cards are used each week in the following order:
 - a purple card with a palm branch silhouette
 - a purple card with a praying hands silhouette
 - a purple card with chalice and paten silhouette
 - a purple card with a gavel silhouette
 - a purple card with a robe silhouette
 - a purple card with a pitcher and basin silhouette
 - a white card with an empty tomb and cross silhouette

The story sets are used in the following order:

- Waving Palms basket
- The Tax Collector and the Pharisee basket
- The Last Supper basket
- Jesus is Put on Trial basket
- Herod, Meet Jesus basket
- Jesus Before Pilate basket
- Crucifixion and Resurrection basket

Items needed from the worship shelf for Lent:

- chalice (for use with the Last Supper basket)*
- paten (for use with the Last Supper basket)*

If communion is served during the "circle of light" the week The Last Supper story is presented you will need to purchase bread and grape juice.

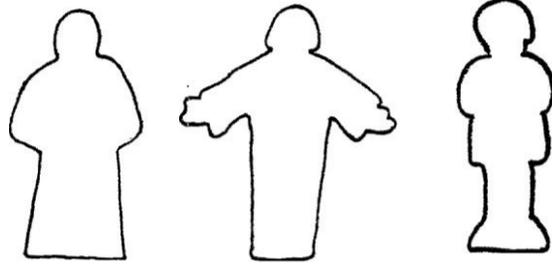
*These items are not furnished for you. We recommend their use and hope you can acquire them locally.

JESUS IS PUT ON TRIAL .•. MATERIALS

- medium oval basket to hold
 - wooden :figure of Jesus
 - wooden :figure of High Priest
 - 2 wooden church leader figures
 - 2 wooden onlooker figures
 - 2 wooden Roman guard figures

-from worship shelf

- Lent basket containing 7 cards



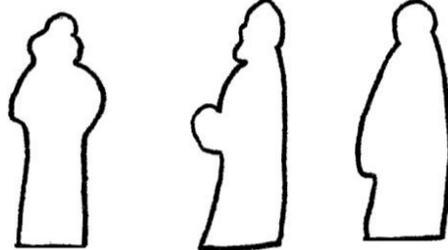
High Priest

Jesus

Roman Guard



Woman



Man

Church Leaders



JESUS IS PUT ON TRIAL

Mark 14:53-65 & Matthew 27:1-2

ACTIONS

Without speaking, stand and get the story from its shelf. Return to the circle and sit down, placing the story next to you.

Reverently stroke one or more of the wooden pieces to center yourself and the children.

Remove the six purple cards from the Lent - 3 basket and lay them out with the plain purple side showing in a straight line, starting to your outer left.

Remove the white card from the Lent-3 basket and lay it next to the purple card closest to you with the plain white side showing.

Turn the first purple card over so the silhouette of the palm branch shows. Touch it reverently.

Turn the second purple card over so the silhouette of the gavel shows. Touch it reverently.

Turn the third purple card over so the silhouette of the chalice and paten shows. Touch it reverently.

Turn the fourth purple card over so the silhouette of the gavel shows. Touch it reverently.

Place the Jesus figure in the center of the story telling area. Place the leaders next to him.

WORDS

Children of God, watch carefully where I go to get this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to. make this story your work today or another day.

All of the words to this story are inside of me. If you will make silence with me, I will find all of the words to this story about Jesus.

These are Lent cards.

They will help us understand the stories we hear during Lent and make us ready for the time for which we are waiting ... Easter.

The first week of Lent we learned about Jesus coming into the city of Jerusalem while the people waved palms.

The second week of Lent we heard the parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee as they prayed.

The third week of Lent we heard how Jesus shared his last supper with his disciples.

This fourth week of Lent we will hear about Jesus being put on trial.

Jesus was arrested in the garden where he had been praying. Judas Iscariot had told the soldiers and church leaders where to find Jesus.

Move the Jesus figure and the two church leaders to one side of the story telling area.

Touch the priest figures as you speak.

Shake your head slowly.

Place an onlooker next to the church leaders.

Place a second onlooker next to the first.

Move the priest closer to Jesus.

Rest your hand lightly on Jesus as you speak.

Touch the high priest and speak quietly, but forcefully.

Rest one or two fingers on the Jesus figure and speak firmly.

After he was arrested, Jesus was taken to the Jewish court. The leaders of the church and the leaders of the nation were there together.

The chief priest and the other leaders tried to find someone who would say Jesus had done a crime so they could have Jesus killed.

But they couldn't really find anyone.

Some of the people told lies about what Jesus had done, but their stories were all different. They couldn't agree on a crime that Jesus had done.

Finally some men stood up and said, "We heard Jesus say that he would tear down the temple we have built. Then he said he would build it up again in three days, without any help."

But even that story was told differently by different men.

Then the high priest stood up in the council and said to Jesus, "Why don't you say something to protect yourself from what these people are saying? Don't you hear the charges they are making against you?"

But Jesus kept quiet and didn't say a word.

The high priest asked him another question. "Are you the Messiah, the son of God?"

"Yes, I am," said Jesus. "Soon you will see me sitting at the right side of the all powerful God, and coming with the clouds in the heavens."

Move the high priest slightly away from the rest of the figures.

Touch first one and then another of the leaders.

Lean forward and speak: sadly.

Emphasize the word "spitting" as you speak.

Cover your eyes with your hands as you speak of the blindfold.

Move a Roman guard next to Jesus and speak sadly.

Move Jesus, the guard, the priest and leaders to one side of the story telling area.

Nod your head sadly as you speak of the order to kill.

"Why do we need any more witnesses? You heard him claim to be God! What should we do with him?"

All the Jewish leaders knew it was against the law of God for anyone to claim to be God.

So they decided that Jesus should die.

Then some of the people started spitting on Jesus.

They blindfolded Jesus and hit him and poked fun of him and said, "Tell us who hit you!"

Then the Roman guards took Jesus and beat him and hurt him very badly.

Early the next morning the priests and leaders tied Jesus up.

They took him to Pilate, the governor of Judea. They wanted the Roman leader to give the order to kill Jesus.

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

I wonder how the people who said bad things about Jesus felt?

I wonder if the church leaders were afraid of Jesus?

I wonder why Jesus didn't try to protect himself with words?

I wonder why the men arrested and tried Jesus at night?

Replace the wooden figures in the basket one at a time.

Watch carefully how I put this story away so you will know how to handle it if you choose to make it your work, today or another day.

Stand and without speaking, return the basket to its place on the shelf Return to the circle.

Watch carefully where I return this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this story your work today or another day.

Be certain everyone has had an opportunity to choose their work

I wonder what you will make your work today? Let's go around the circle and decide what each of us will do.

Jesus is Put on Trial.. ... Teacher Helps

The story of the trial of Jesus is lengthy and will be told in three separate lessons. The first lesson is in today's story. This has to do with Jesus' trial before the leaders of the Jewish church. The council referred to in the story is the Sanhedrin, which functioned like a court of law. It was made up of priests and other Jewish leaders. Both Mark and Matthew have the trial of Jesus take place in the middle of the night, between midnight and dawn. While this seems very unlikely, it does fit with other parts of the story in these gospels. Remember that the Jewish leaders were hesitant to take Jesus on in public because Jesus was very popular with the common people. Perhaps the leaders feared an uprising if they dealt with Jesus when the crowds were around. Whatever the reason, it does give us a window of time when we can believe that if the crowds to whom Jesus had spoken and healed were around, things might have turned out differently.

The high priest in our story would have been Caiaphas, a very powerful man. We are given the impression that the trial was a very organized and formal affair. In reality it was probably thrown together at the last moment. The Jewish leaders were trying Jesus on a charge of blasphemy. In this case the blasphemy, or irreverence, was Jesus' claim that he was the son of God, and therefore equal to God. In our story the leaders tried to bring people forward to speak against Jesus and verify the charges. But none of the people agreed. According to Mosaic law, at least two people had to substantiate the charges to convict someone. (Footnote *e*, Holy Bible, Contemporary English Version, pg 1021, American Bible Society, 1995.) Throughout the trial no two witnesses could agree on the story they would tell. Even when the two men came forward to tell the council of Jesus' promise to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, there was disparity in their accounts.

In the end Jesus was not convicted on the words of other people, but on his own admission that he was the Messiah, Mark 14:62. At this point in the story, the Jewish leaders agreed that Jesus should be put to death. Our story ends today with the leaders taking Jesus to face Pilate, the governor of Judea, a Roman official. There are conflicting accounts of why Jesus needed to be brought before Pilate. Some sources say that the Sanhedrin could only recommend the death penalty. That would mean that it would take a ruling from Pilate for Jesus to be put to death. Other sources disagree, saying that the vote of the Sanhedrin alone could condemn Jesus to death.

Our first wondering question deals with the people who came and spoke out against Jesus. We ask the children to wonder how those people felt as they were speaking against Jesus. I believe most children will say that the men felt bad or maybe sad. I think the children will understand that it would have been a very hard thing to do. Don't be surprised if some of the children say that the people were made to testify against Jesus. It may be the only way they can rationalize the action of those people in their own minds.

The second question wonders if the church leaders were afraid of Jesus. Although this is said in other stories, it is not addressed directly in this story. I believe most of the children will say "yes," but when you push the question further by asking "why?" it may be hard for them to respond. The charges against Jesus are not easy for us to understand, so don't expect that children will comprehend all that happened at Jesus' trial. If you are asked a direct question about why the leaders were afraid of Jesus try something like the following: "The church leaders controlled the people by taking their money to pay to God for the people. The people were taught to follow those laws from the priests. Jesus taught the people that they could be forgiven by God and by each other. He taught them that loving God and loving each other was the most powerful law. The priests didn't like that. They liked being the most powerful people in the country."

The third question wonders why Jesus didn't try to speak in his own defense. This is so hard for us, because we are used to defending our position on everything from child rearing to politics. Some of the children may say that Jesus knew the leaders wouldn't believe him anyway, so he wouldn't bother to speak. Others may say that Jesus was afraid of what the men would do to him. Still others may believe that Jesus was able to trust God, knowing that he would die.

The final wondering question asks why Jesus was tried at night, when all the other people were asleep. I believe most of the children will say it was done so that the people wouldn't try to stop what was happening. Others may say that it was the only time the soldiers could capture Jesus.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

Jesus was falsely accused at his trial. Think of a time when you were accused of doing something that you didn't do. How did you feel? Were people willing to listen to you? What did you say in your own defense?

The people who spoke against Jesus told lies. Each of us has told a lie at sometime in our lives. How did you feel when you spoke something that was untrue? Did you ever wish you could take the words back after you said them? How do you think the witnesses felt later that day or the next when Jesus died?

Jesus faced his accusers all alone. Think of a time when your friends left you to stand by yourself in a tough situation. How did you feel? What were your thoughts about your friends? What do you think Jesus was thinking about his friends during his trial?

