



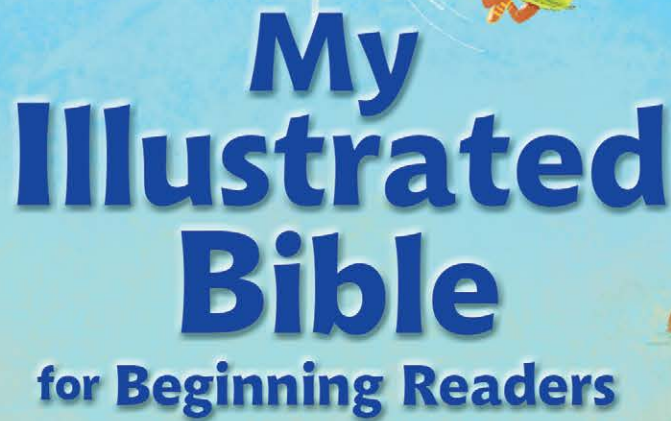
ZONDERkidz™



BEGINNING
1
READING



I Can Read!



**My
Illustrated
Bible**
for Beginning Readers



illustrated by
Peter Francis



• • • • • **Parent / Teacher Guide** • • • • •

God Made Many Things



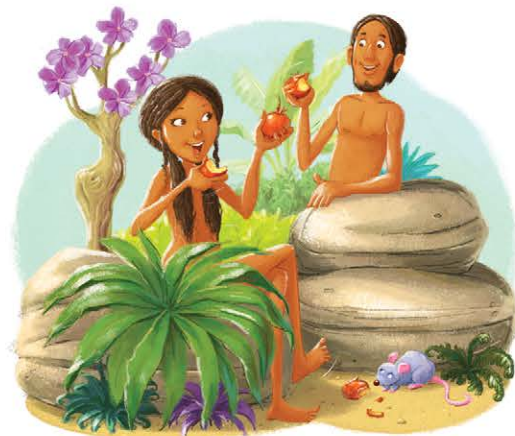
• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. List three things that God made.
2. Look at the pictures. What is your favorite thing that God made?
3. How did the man and woman feel about the world?
4. Why do you think God made the world?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Memorize Genesis 1:1 and 1:31a (NIV): "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth . . . God saw everything he had made. And it was very good." Have students write key words out in various ways (chalk, tablet, sticks, in flour) to help memorize the verses!
2. Read through Genesis 1 and 2 and see how much God made each day! Print or write out bubble numbers 1–7 for each day of creation. Then have readers draw pictures inside the numbers of something God made (or did) each day. Label the numbers: (1) Light and Darkness, (2) Sky and Water, (3) Land and Plants, (4) Sun and Moon, (5) Birds and Fish, (6) People and Animals, (7) God rested.

Something Bad, Something Sad



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the garden like for Adam and Eve before they made a bad choice?
2. Who did Adam and Eve listen to when they ate fruit from that one tree?
3. Look at the picture of Eve on page 17. How was she feeling? What might she have been thinking?
4. How do you feel after you make a bad choice? How do you think God feels?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Making bad choices (doing something wrong, sinning) separates us from God. Have students act out what good choices we can make! Good decisions are ones that help us get along with others and love God more. Read what a poor choice might be, and then have students decide on a better choice and act it out. For example, when they get frustrated with a sibling, they may want to yell, "I hate you!" and stomp off. Have students show a better choice! (For example, the child might sit by their sibling and say, "I don't like that. Can we do this instead?")
Poor choices: Hit a sibling or friend, yank a toy that you want out of someone's hand, quickly hop on a favorite scooter before someone else can, take all the Legos, say something mean to another student about a classmate, ignore a new student.
2. Look at the differences in pages 18 and 19. On page 18 we see what it was like before Adam and Eve sinned (or as they were doing wrong); on page 19 we see that they had done what God had said not to do. Have readers describe the colors on the two pages. Have readers then describe how Adam and Eve looked and felt at those two times. Do they know what it is like to do something wrong and then feel sad that they did it? Have them draw a before and after picture of how they felt. Then pray and ask God to help us make choices that keep us close to God rather than choices that make us and God sad.

Noah Makes a Big Boat



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Bible says that people were sinful and not obeying God. Noah was different. How did God plan to save Noah and his family?
2. How did Noah know to build the ark? What was going to happen that had never happened before?
3. Look at pages 20–21. Count how many cats are pictured. What colors are they? Then count up the cats in this whole story!
4. God took care of Noah and his family and the animals on the ark. Then he promised them that he would never flood the earth again. What was the sign that he gave Noah and the whole earth of this promise? (Have a look at page 25!) Readers can learn more about it in Genesis 9:8–17.

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Have a parent or teacher look up how to fold an origami boat. As students fold their boats, talk about the ark and God's plan to save Noah, his family, and the animals. Talk about the dimensions and how big the boat was. Emphasize Noah's faith and obedience to God! Did you know that there is a life-size ark in Kentucky? With an adult, check out the website at <https://arkencounter.com>. Explore the many facts and pictures in "About the Ark"! See how Noah might have cared for all the animals or see how big the ark really was.
2. Look up and learn a song about Noah, like "Noah, God's Friend" from Crossroads Kids' Club: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFXqsuMg3vA>. This song shows that Noah knew God and was his friend. God doesn't want sin to separate us, but he wants us to know him and love him.

A Promise for Abraham



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did Abraham and Sarah not have that God then talked to them about?
2. What did God promise Abraham and Sarah about their family?
3. What was their son's name?
4. How is your family the same as Abraham and Sarah's family? How is it different?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. God's promises are as sure as . . . gravity! What happens every time something goes up? Try it out: jump up, throw a ball in the air, toss water up in front of you, make a paper ball and throw it up! Just like we can count on gravity, we can count on God's promises being sure! When God said that Abraham and Sarah would have a son—even though they were quite old—he was not joking. They had to wait and wait, but eventually God's promise happened.
2. God talked to Abraham and Sarah, and they talked to God. This is what we do when we pray! We talk to God, and we listen to his voice. Sometimes we don't know what to say. Encourage students to pray God's words! Practice now: "Dear God, thank you that you do what you promise. Thank you that I can trust you. Amen."
(See Genesis 21:1.)

Jacob Sees a Ladder



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What or who was going up and down on the ladder in Jacob's dream?
2. Who talked to Jacob through the dream? What did he say?
3. How did Jacob feel about the dream and what God told him?
4. Describe something amazing about Jacob's dream.

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. God spoke to Jacob in his dream. He promised to be with him. Have readers memorize Genesis 28:15 (NIRV): "I am with you. I will watch over you everywhere you go. And I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Shorten the verse for younger readers, if needed! Use motions, repetition, and fun voices to learn the verse.
2. Have students interact with the text and make a chart. Count up how many times these words appear in the story: Jacob, God, said, to. Show students how to make a chart with tally marks. As an added challenge, have students make a bar chart, showing how many times these words appear in the story. For added practice, have students point out any sight words they are learning.

God Takes Care of Joseph



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the problem with Joseph and his brothers?
2. What did his brothers do with Joseph instead of killing him?
3. Who took care of Joseph even in faraway Egypt?
4. Being in jail is not good. God took care of Joseph even in jail though and used it for good. Where did the man who recommended Joseph to pharaoh meet Joseph?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Have readers act out Joseph's story, either while reading the story again or completely on their own. They can use props and costuming, if they like! At the end of each part, readers can repeat the refrain: "God took care of Joseph!" Help readers to see that no matter where or what was happening that God was with Joseph.
2. Help students realize that these Bible stories happened thousands of years ago and in a different part of the world. Ask students how long it might have taken people to travel from Canaan to Egypt. Did they have cars? Or planes? Point out that traveling places took a lot longer, as thousands of years ago they usually traveled by foot, donkey, or camel (see page 40). Print off or show students maps to help them get the big picture. Point out the general areas for Canaan (Middle East), Egypt (northeast Africa), and then their home. They could color these areas as you talk about distance in terms they can relate to (how many hours in a plane, etc.).

• • • RESOURCE OPTIONS

A basic world map: <https://coloringhome.com/coloring-page/1694174>

A map of Abraham's journey (Joseph's great-grandfather, who also traveled to Egypt because of a famine!): <https://www.kidsbiblemaps.com/abrahams-journey.html>

Joseph Forgives His Brothers



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was Joseph in charge of?
2. What kind of food do you think Joseph's brothers would make with grain?
3. Why would the brothers have been afraid when they found out who Joseph was?
4. What did Joseph say to his brothers once they knew who he was?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Joseph's brothers had to travel to Egypt to get food for their families. Egypt had stored up lots of grain, so they were able to buy grain for food. Help readers understand what families would make with grain. Write or draw out these words on index cards (or larger paper to hang on a wall or put on the floor): wheat (in the field), get the grain, ground grain, flour, make bread. Mix up the index cards and have readers place them in order to better understand how grain would have fed Joseph and his brothers.
2. It is important to keep our relationship with God healthy. We can do this by asking for and receiving forgiveness for things that are not good. When Joseph forgave his brothers, God was pleased. To forgive someone means that we will let God take care of anything that was not right. Help students picture this open relationship. Get some kind of Grab a pan or bucket (a rectangular loaf pan is ideal). Tell students to build a barrier in the middle (mud, sticks, paper towel, play dough, etc.). As they build, talk about what kinds of barriers, walls, or wrongdoings might come between them and God or even other people (fighting with friends, jealousy, bad attitudes, not ever talking, etc.). When they are done, pour water on just one side of the barrier. Does it flow easily to the other side? Or is it hindered (stopped)? Help students to understand that to have a right relationship with God and others means that we keep the pathway open and clear through forgiveness. God helps us not to hold on to any grudges or wrongs that have been done. Spend time in prayer asking God to forgive us if and when we think of something that is not right in our hearts.

Miriam is Brave



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did Miriam's mom hide her baby brother?
2. What did Miriam do that you thought was brave?
3. What did the princess say when she found the baby?
4. Why was Miriam's mom so happy at the end of the story?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. God helps us to be brave like Miriam. Cut out stars. On the one side fill in the blank with ideas: "I am brave when I _____!" (tell others about Jesus, make a new friend, stand up for what is right, etc.). On the front write "God helps [name] to be brave!" Then make the star into a badge and pin or stick it to each reader's shirt as a reminder.
2. Print off a coloring page of Moses (the baby) in the basket. Students can color it first. Then have them cut it apart in 5–10 pieces to make their own puzzle. As they do so, explain to them that God knows what will happen with each part of our lives and how it all fits together. We see bits and pieces of our lives (hold up the parts of the puzzle), but God puts it all together to make a whole picture (have students put together their puzzles). Remind them that it was important in God's plan that Miriam be brave so that she could tell the princess that her mom would care for the baby! This was one part of God's bigger plan!

God Talks to Moses



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who was the man and why did he leave his home in Egypt?
2. Why were Moses' people in Egypt not happy? What are slaves?
3. How did God talk to Moses? Was it through a dream like he did with Jacob?
4. Why did Moses go back to Egypt even though he didn't want to?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Moses heard God's voice through the burning bush. How do we hear God's voice? Students can start learning what God's voice sounds like, even now! By reading about God and knowing the Bible, they will start to train their minds and hearts to recognize God. God's voice will always mirror the Bible. Have readers create a large heart and then write or draw ways that God speaks to our hearts: songs, a feeling or a quickening in our heart, a dream, the Bible, thoughts, prayer, circumstances, journaling or writing, nature. If time permits, take a nature walk and thank God as you walk that he speaks to us! Sing a worship song to him as you walk. Have students pick a spot to sit and talk to God and ask him to help them know his voice as they grow up.
2. Even though Moses was afraid to do what God asked, he obeyed. God used Moses in amazing ways just because he was willing to go and do what God asked! Have readers spend a little more time with the story of Moses through a simple gameboard. Print off or make a game board (google "free game board template"). Use a die to advance and different colors of paper wads for tokens. Label the beginning as Moses, the Shepherd. Label the end as Moses, God's Leader. Mark a few special spots on the board to draw a "special" card (index cards marked with things from his life: Moses was embarrassed by his stutter [go back three spaces]. Moses knew God's voice in the burning bush [go ahead five spaces]. Moses obeyed even when he was afraid [go ahead three spaces]. God allowed his brother Aaron to help him [go back 2 spaces].)

Going Out of Egypt



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who led the people out of Egypt?
2. How did the people know that God was with them?
3. How did God help the people across the big sea?
4. What is your favorite picture in this story? What do you like about it?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. As a review of the story of Moses or to learn a song about the great miracle of the exodus, watch and learn a chorus. Preview and pick songs like one of these:
"Moses Song": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pB_zYT76Og8
"How Did Moses Cross the Red Sea":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HboALKQxbNY>
2. Review colors with students. For example, for younger ones: "Point to something brown in the story." Then go on to purple, blue, gray, white, orange. For older ones, ask more specifically: "Find something brown on page 66" or "Find something white on the right/left page." As an extension, have students then race to find items of the same color in the room or outside.

God's Good Rules



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Stop at page 69. Ask readers to predict what they think will happen. What were the noises?
2. What did God give Moses on the mountain?
3. Name one of the rules.
4. Why do you think it's important to God that you don't want what others have?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Work on memorizing the ten commandments. For younger ones, summarize them and learn "Love God! Love others!" (see Matthew 22:36–40). Reinforce this with chants, hopping from one foot to the other, etc. For older ones, (if possible) learn several rules each day over a week or so. Yell the number and then toss a ball to the one who says the rule. Use lots of repetition and make it fun!
2. Make or print off pictures for each rule. Talk about the meaning of the pictures and how they show the rule. Play "The Ten Commandments Bible Game" featured on *Bible Story Printables*: <https://biblestoryprintables.com/themed-bible-printables/ten-commandment-bible-printables/>

Basically, each student will have a copy of the ten commandments. Print off and cut apart illustrations for each rule. It might be helpful to talk through the pictures and the different wording of the rules before you start. You will need a set of dice. Students will need to add the two numbers on the dice. They can point to each dot and help each other count. The aim of the game is for students to match their rules with the ten illustrations.

God Helps Joshua



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did God tell Joshua to fight the people of Jericho?
2. Stop at page 75. Ask readers: How do you think Joshua and his people could get over the wall?
3. What did God tell Joshua to do about Jericho?
4. Who helped Joshua do what God had asked?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Sometimes God does things in unusual ways! When he asks us to do something, it is important to pray and ask for his help. He knows how to best reach the goal! As a reminder of the unusual way that God gave Joshua victory, make a noisemaker. You will need a paper plate, dry beans, stapler, and decorative items. Simply fold the paper plate in half, staple one part of the edges together before filling with a handful of beans, and then staple the rest closed. Print off and have students attach Joshua 1:9. This was God talking to Joshua: "Be strong and brave . . . I will be with you everywhere you go." Then have students decorate (markers or crayons, stickers, glitter glue, etc.) their noisemakers before trying them out!
2. What instrument is pictured on page 77? Joshua 6:4 says "Have seven priests get trumpets made out of rams' horns." What instruments do you play? What do your parents play? What kinds are common? Look up and play the sound for students. Here is one example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q90581bscs8>

In the Bible the rams' horn is often called a shofar and is used for various reasons, like in battle or in services to remember special days. For something very special, perhaps someone has a horn to show students!

A Man Made Strong by God



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was Samson like?
2. What was Samson's secret?
3. What made Samson sad?
4. Did God allow Samson to be strong again, like he had prayed?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Go through each of the pictures and have readers talk about Samson's emotions. How was Samson feeling? Why was he feeling that way? Help readers make a chart (either on a whiteboard or on a paper) as they mirror these emotions on their faces. Then they can draw or write each emotion on the left side of the page. (For example: happy/content on pages 80–81, upset/angry/mad on page 82, sad/sorrowful on page 83, sad on page 84, strong/determined on page 85.) Then on the right side of the page, have them write or draw about times when they feel similar emotions.
2. God gave Samson strength to do good. He didn't please God though. We need to use what we are good at to do good and to spread God's love! Set up stations of things that kids might be good at: an obstacle course, a coloring station, instruments, building blocks, books/reading, etc. Let readers choose which one they would like to do. Alternately, if you have just one or a few readers, you can talk about what they are good at (what they really like to do). Then complete an activity in their strength and talk about how God might use their strength to bring about good.

A Boy Gets a New Home



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did Hannah name her baby boy?
2. What was Eli's job?
3. How did Eli help Samuel?
4. What did Eli do in his new home?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Your parents may have dedicated you to God, just like Hannah did with Samuel. This means that they want you to follow Jesus all the days of your life. Have students make a headband that says "DEDICATED TO GOD" across it. Decorate it with crayons, markers, stickers, yarn and glue, or whatever else is available.
2. Hannah felt that she needed to give Samuel back to God. For her this meant that Samuel would stay at the temple to take care of God's house. When adults make decisions about following God, what is your role or job? Look at Samuel's face on pages 89, 90, and 91. Does it look like he is having a good or bad attitude? Sometimes it can be hard to be happy about changes that God is asking your parents to make. But you can show your love for God by making the best of it. Look for things to be thankful for! Then your attitude will follow. Make fancy glasses to spy out things to be thankful for! Get pipe cleaners of various colors and help readers bend them into fancy glasses.

David is Brave



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was Goliath like?
2. How was David different from the men?
3. Why did David think he could fight Goliath? Who was going to help him?
4. What did the king think of David after Goliath went down?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. How do you think David was so good at using a slingshot? He probably practiced all the time! He knew that God had given him skills and would help him. God makes each of us good at things! To remember to practice our God-given talents, let's have fun with target practice! Set up a can or a stuffed animal. Then walk back a few paces. Have readers try to knock down the target with a soft ball. Have each try the best of five shots. For an added challenge, have students start farther back!
2. How tall was Goliath? Read 1 Samuel 17:4! It says he was more than 9 feet tall! Let's measure that out so we get an idea of how big he was. Get a tape measure and mark off nine feet on the floor or up a wall. Use masking tape to mark Goliath's height. Then have students compare their height. Then remind students that no matter how big of a challenge we have, God helps us to be brave! We can pray and trust God to help us when God has a big job for us to do.

A Wise King



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who was Solomon?
2. Was Solomon really going to cut the little baby in half?
3. Did Solomon figure out who the real mother was?
4. Who was helping King Solomon?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. What does it mean to be wise? God says that when we know and do what he says, we are wise! We can pray and ask God for wisdom. Knowing the Bible and what God says is important too. Having wisdom can seem a bit like a maze, but if we ask God to help us, he will help us take one step at a time! He will show us a clear path. As a reminder of this truth, have readers complete a maze. Print off a simple maze, using this generator: <https://www.allkidsnetwork.com/mazes/maze-generator>

Add James 1:5 (NIV) to the maze: "If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it."

2. Wisdom isn't just knowing things and being smart. It is making good choices, and God knows what is best! Lead students through this M&M illustration from Children's Ministry Deals (scroll down to the object lesson with M&Ms): <https://www.childrens-ministry-deals.com/pages/solomon-sunday-school-lesson>

Basically, put some M&Ms in front of students. Then ask them a few questions about the M&Ms: color, what is inside, other kinds, etc. This shows what they know about the candy. Then ask these types of questions (application, wisdom): Would it be good for your body to eat M&Ms for every meal? Aren't the green ones just like green vegetables? No! Eating M&Ms all the time is not good for your body. You can eat some, but your body would not do well if you ate only candy all the time. We can learn to make good choices!

Esther Is a Brave Queen



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who was Queen Esther supposed to ask for help?
2. Why was Esther afraid to help? What might happen to her?
3. What did the king do for Esther?
4. What is your favorite picture in this story? Why?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Queen Esther knew of a big problem. Then she did what she could to help. What problems do you know of? Maybe it's something at school, in your family, or in your hometown. What can you do to help? Often a card brings a lot of encouragement. Maybe it's a hug or asking a new student to play on the playground. If the problem is too big, or you aren't sure what else you can do, you know what you can always do to help? You can pray! Philippians 4:6 says, "Don't worry about anything. No matter what happens, tell God about everything. Ask and pray, and give thanks to him." Spend time making a reminder of what you want to do, making a card, or praying.
2. Look at the pictures in the story. Why are the people dressed so differently from how we dress? Queen Esther lived a long time ago. Over 2,000 years ago! She also lived in another part of the world, in Persia. What people wear and even how they act often depends on when and where they live! Show students pictures (printed off or online) of very distinct fashions: a cowboy, an Australian aborigine, an Eskimo, Nepali traditional dress, Lapland traditional clothing, a Maasai warrior. As an added lesson, print off a basic world map and have students place an X in the region of each people group.

Daniel and the Lions



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the new rule that everyone was to follow?
2. Why do you think Daniel did not follow this rule?
3. How did God help Daniel when he was with the lions?
4. What made the king happy?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. To remember the story, have readers create a lion from a paper plate. See the directions from FirstPalette: <https://www.firstpalette.com/craft/paper-plate-animals.html>

Take a white paper plate, cut out ears and a mane to tape or glue to the back. On the front, have readers color the face orange. Then add googly eyes (or draw them) and the mouth and nose. On the back, along with their name, write a key phrase to remember, like, "God helped Daniel!"

2. Daniel was faithful to God. He kept praying even when a new rule said he couldn't. Usually our rules at home, in school, and at church are good ones. Daniel was around some others who were jealous of him though. They bullied him and made a law they knew he would break: that he should stop praying to God! He just kept doing what he knew was right! Get in good habits, and ask God to help you keep doing the right thing. Practice a skill for a while, like a jumping jack or throwing a ball back and forth. Help readers make the connection that practicing something good makes it easier to continue doing good. As a reminder trace each reader's hand. Then write "I can do the right thing!" across the tops of the fingers. Write part of Daniel 6:10 on it: "Daniel did just as he had always done before."

Jonah Learns to Obey



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did God tell Jonah to do?
2. Why was Jonah on the boat?
3. When did the storm stop?
4. What did Jonah do in the fish?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Jonah would have been better off to obey God the first time, all the way, and with a happy heart! Create "keys to obedience." To create this key ring, sample directions at *The Better Mom*: <https://www.thebettermom.com/blog/2011/10/23/keys-to-obedience-tutorial>

To simplify the craft, have the words on the keys and on colorful paper already. Otherwise have students color the keys.

2. Jonah learned to obey God. Play the "Obedience Game"! See *Meaningful Mama* for the full details: <https://meaningfulmama.com/the-obedience-game-character.html>

To summarize, each student has a paper. The teacher or parent will give them something to run and do in order to get a sticker or letter in their quest to spell "Obedience" on their paper. (Complete "obey," if a shorter version is needed!)

Jesus Came to Love Us



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where did Mary and Joseph rest after their trip?
2. What happened that night?
3. What did Mary and Joseph call the baby?
4. Who is Jesus?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Jesus came to teach the world about love. One thing we learn in the Bible is that Jesus loves each of us so very much! Make a heart and write "Jesus Loves Me" above and below a picture of each student! If getting a picture of each student is too complicated, then have students draw a picture of themselves. Alternately, trace their hands, place hearts in the hand and write "Jesus Loves Me" on or in it.
2. From the very beginning, when Adam and Eve sinned, God planned a rescue. Sin and death wouldn't win! He knew he would send Jesus as a baby into the world. It was the only way to beat sin and death. So Jesus' birth is a huge reason to celebrate! Let's have a birthday party for Jesus! Make it as simple or elaborate as you like: streamers, party hats, cupcakes, banners; or draw a picture of the best birthday party for Jesus. Be sure to sing happy birthday to Jesus!

Angels Sing to Shepherds



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why were the shepherds afraid?
2. Why did the angels say the shepherds should go to town?
3. What do you think it sounded like when the angels sang?
4. How did the shepherds feel when they saw Jesus, God's Son?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Join the angels in praising God! Decide on a praise song to sing (or learn a new one). Practice it and sing to God. Sing on your own, with an instrument, or find it online.
2. Tell others about the birth of Jesus and that he is God's Son! The shepherds were excited to share about his birth. Make a special birth announcement or card and share it with a family member, neighbor friend, or pen pal.

The Wise Men Give Their Best



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the wise men see that showed them there was a new king?
2. What were they bringing this special person?
3. In what town was the baby king when they visited him?
4. Who was the little king?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. The wise men brought their best gifts to Jesus. What is the best gift you have ever gotten? Let's make a present and talk about what we would give Jesus. Get boxes (tissue boxes, gift boxes, cereal boxes), gift wrap (or construction paper), bows, ribbon, stickers, etc. Have tape and scissors handy as well. Let students talk about the most special gifts they could give Jesus. Then let them know that since we can't really give actual gifts to Jesus, we can obey and love Him. These can always be our best gifts to Jesus!
2. The wise men followed a bright star to Jesus. It may have been quite a journey. They were determined to find him to bring him gifts. Set up an obstacle course and play follow the leader, just as the wise men kept their eye on the star and followed it to Bethlehem. Take turns with the leader.

Jesus is Baptized



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who was Jesus' cousin?
2. What were some of the things John told people?
3. Who wanted to be baptized by John?
4. Who said, "This is my Son. I love him very much"?

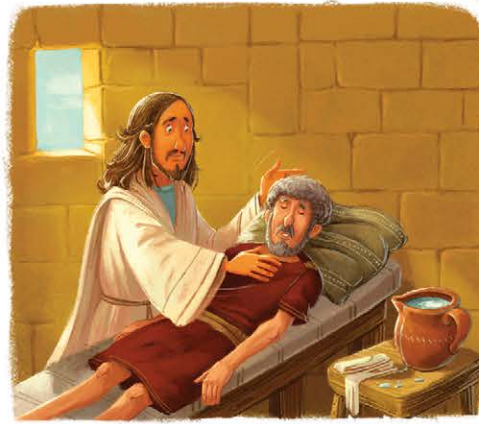
••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. *Before reading this story, have parents write down one way that they are proud of their student. Let them know that you will be sharing this with the group. After reading the story, gather readers around. If possible, gather near a river, lake, or pond. God was proud of His Son and said so as Jesus was baptized. Remember what God said? Your parents are proud of you too. This is what they said: "Child's name, you are my son/daughter, and I love you. I am so proud of you because . . ." End this time with prayer, thanking God for making us each different, special, and loved.*

Credit to Mission Bible Class: <https://missionbibleclass.org/new-testament/part1/life-of-christ-early/baptism-of-jesus/>

2. What is baptism? Jesus was showing us how to identify with God. Baptism is a way to show others that we have changed—we know that we have done wrong, that Jesus forgives us when we ask, and that we want to follow Jesus and be like him. Let's watch a short video that explains this. (This might also be a good time to share the gospel and what it means to "be saved" or "have Jesus in your heart.") Kids on the Move, "What Is Baptism?": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29ipPg2y-K0>

A Sick Friend



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did the men want to see Jesus?
2. What was wrong with their sick friend?
3. How did they get their friend to Jesus?
4. How did Jesus help the man on the mat?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. We need each other. We are meant to have friends and be a good friend. I bet the man on the mat was really glad for his friends! They were determined to get him to Jesus. They knew Jesus could make their friend well! Great friends will take you closer to Jesus. Let's play a game where we need each other. Get a beach towel and a ball (try various sizes—ping pong, beach ball, whiffle ball). Have four friends each take a corner. Place a ball in the middle, and have the friends try to take their "friend" (ball) from one area to another (mark these out ahead of time) without dropping him. If you have more students, you can make it into a race! Then wrap up by talking about how it is to work together. Remember the friends in the story and how they were good friends for taking the man to Jesus.
2. To connect the friendship, the determination, and the gospel together, show readers this clip by Amanda White from Impress Your Kids.com. In just a few minutes she shares the story with creative, great visuals.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29ipPg2y-K0>

Jesus Calms a Storm



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What made Jesus' friends so afraid?
2. What was Jesus doing when the storm came up?
3. Did the wind and water stop when Jesus said, "Stop!"?
4. How do you think the friends felt when Jesus calmed the storm?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Read the story again and have students add sounds and motions. First talk through the story to decide together what they can do:
Come with me, p. 153: come here hand motion
Wind started to blow, p. 154: quietly start blowing
Faster and faster, p. 154: blow louder and louder, place hands on sides of mouths to make the loudest wind!
Help us, p. 155: yell "help us," and/or extend hands in front of them
Stop, p. 156: freeze
Did you see that, p. 157: looks of emotion (shock, happiness, amazement)
God's Son, p. 157: point up toward heaven
2. Google, choose, and print off a coloring page for readers. As they color, share with readers how Jesus calms storms in our own lives. While we aren't in boats with actual storms, we do have things happen in our lives that make us afraid. (Give a few examples, such as when our pets get sick or someone at school is mean.) Those are our "storms." We can pray about our lives, and God gives us peace to help us. He can comfort us and show us what we should do in hard times.

A Boy Shares His Lunch



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Show on your hand how many fish the boy had in his lunch. Then show how many pieces of bread he had.
2. What did Jesus do with the lunch before he gave it to all the people?
3. Look at page 160. How do you think the boy's lunch fed so many?
4. How did the boy feel once he saw how Jesus had used his lunch?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Hide God's Word in Your Heart: Have readers memorize Job 5:9 (NIRV): "He does wonderful things that can't be understood. He does miracles that can't even be counted." Shorten it to just one of the sentences for younger ones. This verse tells us about God and Jesus. A miracle is an amazing event that doesn't usually happen. God helps in an unusual way, just like in this story when a little bit of food fed thousands of people!
2. Jesus meets our needs and starts with whatever we have to offer him. Sometimes it doesn't feel like we are giving him much, but he can use it for amazing things! Don't you think it would be exciting to give Jesus your little lunch and see it be used to feed so many? What do you have to give Jesus that he can use in big ways? Maybe it's a smile for a sad classmate. Or maybe it's a picture you've colored that you have your parent send to someone who is sick. Maybe you can call your grandparent and say how much you love them. If you can do one of these now, then take some time right away! If not, then decide to do something later.

If you want an exciting way to picture how something small can turn big, try the Mentos (candy) and diet soda experiment (see the link provided with a tie-in to this story): <https://www.childrens-ministry-deals.com/pages/jesus-feeds-the-5000-sunday-school-lesson>

As an extension, have each student take a Mento and then contribute it to the tube that will be dropped into the soda. Talk about how we each have talents, abilities, and things (toys, house, food) that God has given us (represented by the Mento). When we give those to God, he can use them! When we all work together, it's even more amazing!

Walking on Water



••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did Jesus leave with his friends in the boat?
2. How did Jesus get to the boat in the middle of the lake?
3. Who did the friends say Jesus is?
4. What would you have thought if you were in the boat? How would you have felt?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. We need to show Jesus' love to everyone. Who are your friends? Do they know Jesus? Color a picture of Jesus walking on the water. (It might be fun to print one out where you cut a slit in the coloring page, attach the Jesus figure to a popsicle stick, and show how he moves across the water.) Then have readers practice telling the story. Encourage readers to share this miracle story with their friends to tell them about their amazing friend Jesus.
2. Why didn't Jesus row another boat to catch up to his friends? Why didn't he fly through the air? It was the stormy waters that made his friends afraid, so he walked to them on the water, got into the boat with them, and the wind died down (Mark 6:51). Jesus walked on the water to show us his power. He will always be with us in the boat if we are his friend. Make an easy origami boat, like this one from The Spruce Crafts: <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/easy-origami-boat-instructions-4057416>

Write this reminder on the side of the boat: "Jesus is with me in my storms!"

Jesus and the Children



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the moms and dads want for their children?
2. Who said no to the moms and dads? Why?
3. Who said yes to the children and wanted to see them?
4. What do you think Jesus and the children talked about?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Have readers act out this story. Depending on age and preference, they can act it out on their own, or you can read it as they act.
2. Do you know that we can still talk to Jesus, just as these children did? Jesus still really wants us to come to him to talk and share. If you could sit next to Jesus, what would you tell him? When we talk to Jesus, it is called praying. We can't see him like these children did, but he can hear us. You can share anything with him. To help you think through what you might tell him, let's draw answers to these questions:
What made you really happy today or in the last few days?
What is your favorite thing in your room?
Who is your best friend? (or a good friend)
What makes you sad or nervous today?
What do you really, really like about your grandparents?

After readers have had time to draw out their responses, direct them in praying through these drawings. They can show thankfulness, pray that the people will know Jesus or will follow him in decisions, and ask for help with whatever makes them sad or nervous. End the prayer time by thanking Jesus that he always wants us to come to him!

Jesus on a Colt



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did Jesus want to ride into Jerusalem?
2. What did the people shout as Jesus rode into the city?
3. What did Jesus tell the people?
4. What details do you notice in the pictures? Talk about what you see.

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Many people welcomed Jesus into the city. It must have been like a parade! Have kids make a palm leaf out of green construction paper. To make it easier, draw a leaf on the paper, and then they can cut around the shape. Then have them set up a parade route. Mark 11:9 says that they shouted, "Hosanna!" as well. As "Jesus" (they can take turns) pretends to ride on a colt, have the rest of the students shout "Hosanna! Jesus is our King!" as they wave the palm branches. (See also Ministry to Children: <https://ministry-to-children.com/palm-sunday-preschool/>.)
2. If there is a letter of the week, have students point out this letter on each page. If not, choose a letter to practice. Count up how many uppercase and lowercase letters they find of each. If students are practicing sight words, have them look for those as well. As an added challenge, see if they can find each letter of the alphabet throughout this story.

Supper with Jesus



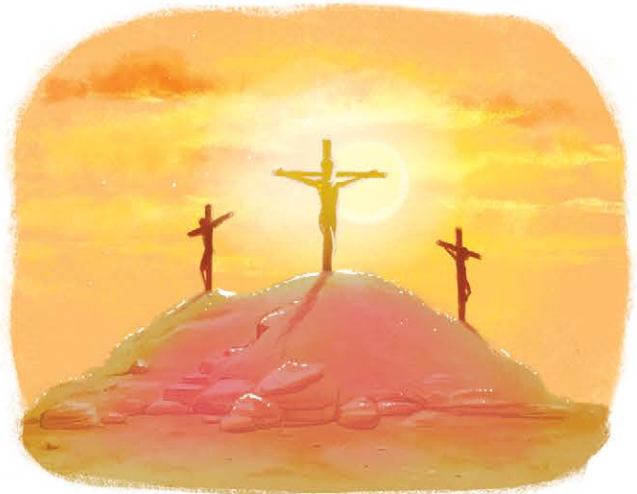
••• DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were Jesus and his friends celebrating?
2. What were Jesus' friends to keep doing when he was gone?
3. Why were Jesus' friends sad?
4. Look at pages 182–183: How many friends were at the table with Jesus?

••• EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Do you know that people who believe in Jesus still do what he said at this supper? It's often called communion. It may not always look exactly the same, but it is always a time to remember what Jesus did for each one of us. He knew what was coming, and was preparing his friends for it. Make some bread and a cup out of play dough and set it somewhere so that as you read the next stories, you can remember this special supper. Figure out what Jesus meant when he said they were to remember the way he died for them. Then ask your parents what communion looks like at your church.
2. Matthew 26:30 says that they sang a hymn together after supper. We don't know exactly what hymn that was. We have many hymns to choose from today! Do you have a favorite? Choose one well-known hymn and learn the first verse. "To God Be the Glory" or "The Doxology" are good choices. If you play an instrument, play and sing. Alternately, listen and learn online and encourage students to keep singing praises to God, just as Jesus and his friends did at the supper in Jerusalem!

The Love of Jesus



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Had Jesus hurt the men who hurt him? What did these hurt men do to Jesus?
2. What did Jesus ask God to do to these men?
3. Why did Jesus die on the cross?
4. Can we know God?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Hide God's Word in Your Heart: Have readers memorize all or part of John 3:16 (NIV): "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life." Use motions and repetition with varying loudness to memorize the verse. You can explain that our sin separates us from God. But because Jesus washed away our sin on the cross, we can be God's friend and go to heaven someday! (If students know John 3:16, read through and memorize all or part of Romans 3:22–25.)
2. Through a science illustration, show students that Jesus took away our sin when he died on the cross. Many sites have this illustration, either in picture or video format. See, for instance, the following page from *Another Day in the Ministry*, which gives step-by-step instructions: <http://anotherdayintheministry.blogspot.com/2011/04/easter-object-lesson.html>

Use a penny (represents us), a plate, colored water (perhaps red to illustrate our sin), a candle (Jesus, the light of the world), matches or lighter (the cross), and a cup to cover the candle (This extinguishes the candle, so point out that at the cross Jesus gave up his life so that he could take our sins upon himself. We could be clean!).

Jesus Is Alive Again!



• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why was Mary sad?
2. Who asked, "Why are you crying?"
3. Why wasn't Jesus in the tomb where people had buried him?
4. Is Jesus dead or alive? Where is he now?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Jesus is more powerful than death! Help students see that Jesus rose from the dead. Mrs. Jones's Creation Station walks us through a retelling and craft, "How to Teach Jesus' Resurrection": <https://www.mrsjonescreationstation.com/jesus-resurrection-craft-for-preschoolers/>

For the craft, cut a paper plate in half, and then color and staple a set of three crosses to the top of one semicircle. Next cut a small u-shape out of the flat side of the second half-plate (for the opening of the tomb). Then color the Jesus and angel figures and glue or attach them to the craft. Use a fastener (or even fold an edge and use tape) to attach a "He Is Risen!" circle to the side of the tomb entrance, so it can open and close. As you create this craft, review the importance of each part and emphasize that Jesus did not stay in the tomb! Adapt the craft so that the Jesus figure can be moved from inside the tomb to the outside (use a small piece of tape or a small piece of poster tack).

2. We don't need to be afraid of death. Jesus showed us that he is stronger than death. He came so that we could have life! When we trust him and ask him to come into our lives, he holds our hands. He walks with us through life and through death so that we can live with him in heaven. To remember the power of the cross, print off a cross maze (google "Jesus and me maze"). The following are two options:

From CTA Christ to All, "Jesus Lives for Me Maze Activity": https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.ctainc.com/downloads/resource/JLV19AD_PUZ.pdf

From BrainyMaze, "Easter Mazes for Kids": <https://brainymaze.com/wp-content/uploads/BrainyMaze/Themes/Easter/EasterCrossMaze.pdf>

Telling Others about Jesus



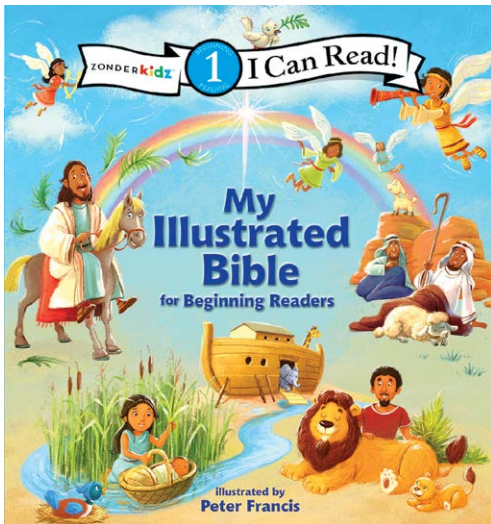
• • • DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is Jesus?
2. What did Jesus tell his friends to go and do?
3. Where did Jesus go?
4. What do people say when they hear about Jesus?

• • • EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Practice telling your friends about how much Jesus loves them. You can tell them what you've been learning, show them some of your crafts, and tell them that Jesus loves each of us so much that he died on the cross for our sins! But then he became alive again to show that he is stronger than death! He wipes us clean, and we can be friends with God again. We can live with him after we die because he will take us to heaven.
2. Wrap up your time together with this short but powerful object lesson. Pastor Brett from Cornerstone Church explains how Jesus came to our rescue. If possible, learn this lesson yourself; if not possible, then show students this lesson. If time permits, you can even have students try to learn how to tell the gospel with this lesson. The tricky part might be tearing the paper layers!

Jesus Came to Our Rescue object lesson: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/97249673186585282/> or try <https://www.facebook.com/SACornerstoneKids/videos/2680111075398622/>



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KIRSTEN HERMAN

Living in Michigan, Kirsten Herman freelances as a proofreader and copy editor. Her career has also included teaching middle school and adult education in English and writing a book with her parents. Growing up in Austria as a missionary kid provided many interesting stories of God's faithfulness!