



ELEMENTARY

## Week of October 25

**Bible Story:** Thief on the Cross ( Matt 27:11-66; Luke 23)

**The Jesus Storybook Bible (JSB):** The Sun Stops Shining (302-309)

**BIG Idea:** God's grace is big enough, so we can go to Him no matter who we are or what we've done.

**Bible Story Video:** <https://youtu.be/HL8R158Ujp4>

### THE BIG BIBLE STORY

Last week we heard about the Last Supper that Jesus had with his disciples. Why is it called the Last Supper? (*Take answer.*) That's right—it was the last supper that Jesus would have with his disciples before dying on a cross. The Jewish leaders were upset with Jesus because He claimed to be the King of the Jews—the Son of God, but they didn't believe him. The Jewish leaders wanted to arrest Jesus. There was just one problem, though—they couldn't find Him. Let's see what they did about that.

The Jewish leaders paid Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, 30 silver coins to betray Jesus. Judas told the Jewish rulers where Jesus was and helped the soldiers arrest Him while He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane.

After they arrested Jesus, they took him to Pilate, the Roman governor. Pilate was like a judge who would decide if Jesus was guilty or innocent. Pilate couldn't find anything that Jesus had done wrong, but the Jewish leaders and their followers shouted for Jesus to be punished anyway. Finally, Pilate gave in to their demands and asked what they wanted him to do to Jesus.

When Pilate asked the people what they wanted him to do with Jesus, they shouted out, "Crucify him!" That means they wanted Jesus to be nailed to a wooden cross and killed. So, the soldiers took Jesus, beat him, and nailed his hands and feet to a wooden cross.

Jesus wasn't alone on the cross, though. There were two thieves being crucified with Him. One of the thieves joined the crowd in making fun of Jesus. He laughed at Jesus and said, "If you came to save God's people, why don't you save yourself!" But the second thief reacted differently. Let's read in the Bible what the second thief said (*turn to Luke 23:40-42, and read aloud.*) "But the other criminal scolded [the first]. 'Don't you have any respect for God' he said. 'Remember, you are under the same sentence of death. We are being punished fairly. We are getting just what our actions call for. But [Jesus] hasn't done anything wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.'"

How do you think Jesus responded to the second thief? (*Take answers.*) Let's find out if you're right! Even though the second criminal had done something terrible and was at the end of his life, Jesus told him, "Today you will be with me in paradise." Sometimes we think of paradise as being a beach or tropical island, but what kind of paradise do you think Jesus was talking about? (*Take answer.*) That's right—He was talking about heaven.

Shortly afterwards, the whole land grew dark, even though it was in the middle of the afternoon. Jesus called out to God, and then took His last breath. Jesus' body was taken down from the cross, wrapped in linen cloth, and placed in a tomb. Jesus was dead. But don't worry! That's not where the story ends. Next week we will learn what happens next!

### BIG BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS?

- What do you think Jesus meant when He told the thief that he would be in paradise?
- Did it surprise you that Jesus told the thief he would be in paradise with Him? Why or why not?
- JSB question: Why did Jesus shout "It is finished!"

### BIG BIBLE STORY ACTIVITIES

**Journal:** Write a letter to someone explaining how God wants everyone to be part of His family, no matter who you are or what you have done.

**Art:** Draw a picture of Jesus on the cross.