

NOT-SO-NICE BIBLE STORIES

GOORRY DEATHS

BIBLE STUDY

Written by Jay Reed · Illustrated by Gleisson Cipriano

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INTRODUCTION

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

R O M A N S 6 : 2 3

These words from the apostle Paul serve as the theme for each study in this series. Throughout the lessons, your students will examine the various consequences and “wages” of sin and how it ruins God’s plan and our lives. But your students will also see God’s solution to sin and death through the victorious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Finally, they’ll be challenged to apply their learning from each lesson to their daily lives, that their faith might continue to grow and be strengthened.

SIX STEPS TO BEING THE BEST BIBLE TEACHER EVER

- **Pray**—for each of your students. Ask the Holy Spirit to open their hearts and your eyes to see how to effectively teach them God’s Word.
- **Scan**—the whole series. Get a feel for the warm-ups, activities, discussions, and Student Pages. There may be some activities that, in your mind, will fit better with a different lesson. Scanning ahead helps you to be creative in your approach to the lesson.
- **Pray**—through the Word. Before you jump in to the lesson preparation, read the passage that it’s based on. Ask God to open your eyes to see what it is that He wants you to communicate to the students whom He has entrusted to you. Study it for yourself first.
- **Prepare**—more than ten minutes ahead. Yeah, we’ve all done it—last-minute, rushed preparation. But if you take the time to prepare well in advance, the Holy Spirit will have more time to work on you and you’ll have more to bring to the lesson.
- **Tweak**—this curriculum. This is middle school tested, but your class has its own unique “bent.” Use what communicates to them and tweak the rest.
- **Involve**—all the students. Junior high students learn by doing. They are in a developmental stage where they believe what they do more than they do what they believe.

GOING THROUGH THE LESSON

At the start of each lesson are the Key Points for that study:

- **The Wages of Sin**—points out the consequences of sin, both in terms of human toll (often death) but also in estrangement from God. This key point answers the question, why is sin so bad?
- **The Free Gift of God**—points to God’s grace to save people from the consequences of sin and, rather than death, give eternal life as a free gift. This key point answers the question, how is God so good?
- **Set Free to Live**—invites a personal application of God’s grace to your students’ daily lives. This key point answers the question, so what does this mean to me here and now in my life?

Very simply, God is the hero of every Bible story (even the goriest ones). Jesus’ death and resurrection are the means by which we receive the blessings of God’s heroic work.

BEFORE THE LESSON

Here are listed the materials you need to assemble and preparations you need to make to be ready for the lesson. Times listed next to each activity are approximate. Read through the activity to determine whether you will need more or less time.

WARM - U P

These activities are designed to involve the class right away and set the stage for the Bible story.

THE STORY

These are creative approaches to getting your class into the Word.

DIGGING IN

This portion helps your students process what they read and start drawing applications from the lesson.

THE WAGES OF SIN AND THE FREE GIFT OF GOD

Each Student Page contains these headings with arrows next to them. This is the portion of the lesson where you want to summarize these two points by having students put them in their own words. Basically, you will be teaching them in each lesson to see what’s so bad about sin (the wages) and what’s so good about God’s forgiveness and grace (the gift).

APPLYING IT

In this portion, you are looking to help your students bring the lesson home into their own lives. They will sometimes struggle to make a direct application, so you might want to have some examples from your own life or things to suggest that might fit theirs.

The various “Set Free to Live” sentences are to help students see that because of God’s grace, they are free from the guilt and death caused by sin and can live lives in joyful response to God’s blessings. The point is to help them see that Jesus not only gives us the promise of eternal life when we die, but He is also present with us here and now, every day.

Finally, as a class or in small groups, close your time together in prayer.

May God bless you as He uses you to communicate the life-giving truth of Jesus Christ to your students!



LESSON 1

LET IT BRIMSTONE!

GENESIS 19:1–29

KEY POINTS

- **The Wages of Sin:** Extreme wickedness and perversion of God’s creation and will bring extreme wrath and punishment.
- **The Free Gift of God:** In the midst of wickedness, God remembers and honors His covenant, turning away His wrath and instead bringing blessing based on Christ’s substitutionary death—the propitiation for our sins.
- **Set Free to Live:** Jesus has me under a new covenant, God’s wrath is turned away, and I am forgiven and can try again every day after I sin.

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Gather basic supplies, including whiteboard and markers, and pens or pencils.
- Obtain a picture of a rabid dog.
- Print the words of Isaiah 53:5–6 on cards of a convenient size for students to carry with them.
- Make copies of the Student Page.

WARM-UP (3–5 MINUTES)

Show the class the picture of the rabid dog and say something like this: “This dog has rabies. Once the disease progresses beyond a certain stage, it is incurable. It will eventually kill the dog. In the meantime, rabies can cause the dog to attack other animals and people, spreading the disease to them. Let’s say this dog is headed for a park where a bunch of kids are playing. There’s not enough time to get the kids to safety. Your only option to save the kids is to shoot the dog. Do you kill the dog? Why or why not?” Allow students to share their thoughts, then transition to the story by saying something like this: “In today’s lesson, we will see God faced with a similar situation.”

THE STORY (10–15 MINUTES)

FROM BAD TO WORSE

Lead your class to the “From Bad to Worse” section of the Student Page. Have students read each portion and then tell what the problem in that passage was and what the solution was. You can walk through it together as a class or assign portions to individuals or small groups.

Genesis 19:1–3

Problem for angels: **No place to spend the night; they plan to stay in the town square.**

Lot’s solution: **Lot invites the angels to stay at his home.**

Genesis 19:4–8

Problem caused by men of Sodom: **They surround Lot’s house; they want to have sex with the visitors.**

Lot’s solution: **Lot offers to send out his two virgin daughters instead of the visitors.**

Genesis 19:9–11

Problem for Lot: **The men of Sodom are going to force their way into the house.**

Angels’ solution: **The angels pull Lot inside the house and strike the men of Sodom blind.**

Genesis 19:12–16

Problem for Lot’s family: **The angels tell Lot they have come to destroy the city; he needs to take his family and escape quickly. Lot delays because not everyone in his family believes him.**

Angels’ solution: **The angels take Lot and his family by the hand and lead them out of the city.**

Genesis 19:17–23

Problem for Lot: **The angels tell Lot to flee to the hills, but Lot fears for his family’s safety.**

Angels’ solution: **The angels allow Lot to take his family to the town of Zoar.**

Genesis 19:24–29

Problem for the land and occupants of Sodom and Gomorrah: **God rains down fire and burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah.**

God’s solutions for the wicked: **They are punished for their sins.**

God’s solution for those under His covenant: **God spares Lot and his family since they are under God’s covenant with Abraham.**

DIGGING IN (15 MINUTES)

R A N K T H E C H A R A C T E R S

Direct students to this section and give them a few minutes to write a number from 1 to 7, ranking the characters in the account from best (1) to worst (7). After they have ranked them, ask the class who they ranked where. Why did the class place the characters in this order?

Wrap up this section by asking, “How do you think the analogy of the rabid dog applies to this story?” **The pervasive wickedness and evil of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah compare with the rabid dog in that they were beyond a point of help and healing, and to keep this wickedness from spreading, God destroyed the region.**

Next, say something like this: “The outcome of sin is easy to spot in this story: the destruction of the land. But what about the free gift of God? How do we see a hint of the Gospel in Genesis 19:29? What do you think the text means when it says that ‘God remembered Abraham?’” **God remembered the covenant He established with Abraham (Genesis 12:1–3) and honored it by rescuing Lot.**

APPLYING IT (10–15 MINUTES)

T H E W A G E S O F S I N

Say something like this: “According to the Bible, all people have been infected by the ‘rabies’ of sin. The whole world stands under the same judgment as Sodom and Gomorrah because of sin. Because there was no cure for the dog’s rabies, it had to be killed. Similarly, if there is no cure for sin, we are all doomed. So the question is, why doesn’t God destroy us all right now? What’s the cure for a doomed world? Let’s take a look at 1 John 4:10 and see.” Have someone read the verse out loud.

Explain that the word *propitiation* means satisfying the demands of justice, turning aside God’s wrath by the means of a payment or gift. In layman’s terms, Jesus’ death on the cross is the cure for sin that infects the world. Through faith in His life, death, and resurrection, the penalty and punishment of sin are turned away from us.

Point the students’ attention to the word *propitiation* on the Student Page and have them fill in the blanks for this simple definition: “The removal of God’s **wrath** by the offering of a **payment** or **gift**.”

Tell them that the prophet Isaiah talked about Jesus being the payment or propitiation for the world hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Explain that you are going to give them a Bible passage on a card and you want them to read it and then draw a picture representing propitiation in the box on the Student Page. Hand out cards with this passage on it:

But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:5–6

Give your class a few minutes to draw, and then ask them to share their drawings.

Direct students' attention to the "Wages of Sin" and "Free Gift of God" headings on the Student Page. Ask, "From this lesson, what are the wages, or consequences, of sin?" **Extreme wickedness and perversion of God's creation and will deserve extreme wrath and punishment from God.** Have students write their answer on the Student Page. Next, ask, "What does the free gift of God look like?" **Through faith in Jesus, God's wrath is turned away, and we receive His blessing instead.** Again, have students write their answer on the Student Page.

SET FREE TO LIVE

Conclude by saying something like this: "I want you to try to put this concept in your own words. At the bottom of the Student Page is a sentence starter. I want you to complete the sentence in a way that you could explain it to a friend." You might need to give them an example, such as ". . . I am forgiven and get a new start every day" or ". . . I am thankful every day for Jesus paying my debt."

After you give them time to complete the sentence, encourage them to put what they wrote in the form of a closing prayer. For instance, from the preceding example, a prayer might read, "Father, thank You that because Your Son paid my debt, I get a new start every day. Amen."