

Bible Story 45: JESUS' APPEARANCES AND ASCENSION TO HEAVEN

SCRIPTURE: Appears to Tomas and Disciples: John 20:24-31
 Appears to Peter at Shore: John 21:1-19
 Ascends to Heaven: Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:3-11
 Promises to Return: Revelation 22:7, 12-13, 20

MEMORY VERSE: John 3:16, John 20:29, John 20:31 or 1 John 1:9

BIBLE STORY:

At sunrise on Sunday after Jesus' crucifixion and burial, God resurrected Jesus from the dead. Jesus was alive!

On that Sunday, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene near the tomb; Cleopas and his friend, who were walking to a village called Emmaus; and His disciples in a locked room in a house. After they saw Jesus with their own eyes, they believed. Jesus was alive!

On that Sunday, the disciple Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus appeared. Later when the disciples saw Thomas, they told him about Jesus appearing to them. Thomas replied that he would not believe that Jesus arose, unless he touched the nail scars on His hands and touched where the sword pierced His side.

A week later on a Sunday evening, the disciples were once again in a locked room at the house. This time Thomas was with them. Suddenly Jesus appeared inside the locked room. Jesus said, **"Peace be with you!"**

Looking at Thomas, Jesus said, **"Thomas, put your finger where the nail scars are on My hands. Thomas, touch My side where the sword pieced My side. Stop doubting. Believe!"**

Thomas replied, **"My Lord! My God!"**

Then Jesus said, **"You believe, because you have seen Me. Oh, how blessed are those who believe that I have risen without even seeing Me with their own eyes!"**

On another occasion, the disciple Simon Peter told the disciple John and five other disciples that he was going fishing. They decided to go fishing with him. They fished all night, but they did not catch any fish.

Early the next morning, the disciples' boat was about one hundred yards from shore. Jesus appeared on the shore and called out, **"Have you caught any fish?"**

They answered, **"No."**

Jesus yelled back, **"Throw your net on the right side of your boat! You'll catch some fish!"**

They did. They caught 153 fish in the net!

John said, **"It's the Lord!"**

Peter quickly put on his outer garment and jumped into the water, going toward Jesus. The other disciples followed, dragging the heavy load of fish in the net behind them.

Jesus had prepared breakfast for them, cooking some fish on a fire of burning coals. Jesus took some fish and bread, giving it to them to eat.

Then Jesus spoke to Simon Peter. Jesus asked, **"Peter, do you love Me more than these?"**

Peter replied, **"Yes, my Lord, you know that I love You."**

Jesus said, **"Peter, feed My lambs."**

A second time Jesus asked, **"Do you really love Me, Peter?"**

Peter replied, **"Lord, yes! Why you know that I love You."**

Jesus said, **"Peter, take care of My sheep."**

A third time Jesus asked, **"Peter, do you love Me?"**

Peter was hurt, because Jesus asked the same question three times. Peter replied, **"You know all things, Lord. Therefore, You know that I love You."**

Jesus said, **"Peter, feed My sheep. Follow Me!"**

After Jesus arose from the grave, He appeared to many different people for forty days. Jesus did many marvelous signs. Why? So we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

One day as Jesus was telling His disciples to be His witnesses to all the people of the world, He began to rise. Jesus was moving upward! The disciples watched until a cloud hid Jesus from their sight.

Two angels stood by them and said, **"One day Jesus will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven."**

Many years later, the disciple John was a prisoner on an island, because he shared his testimony about Jesus. God gave John a vision of heaven. In the glory of heaven, Jesus said to him, **"Look I am coming soon. Yes, I am coming soon!"**

LIFE LESSONS:

1. Doubting Thomas believed Jesus was alive when he saw Him with his own eyes. Jesus appeared to many others. Believe that God raised His Son Jesus from the dead. Believe Jesus is alive in heaven!
2. Jesus forgave Peter for denying three times that he was a follower of His during His trial. Jesus restored their relationship. Pray and ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins.
3. Jesus told His disciples to be His witnesses. Share Jesus with others.
4. Jesus ascended to heaven and promises to return one day. How can you join Jesus in heaven? Pray to God saying you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, who died on the cross for your sins and arose from the grave. Ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins and accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What happened when Thomas saw Jesus with his own eyes?
2. What did Jesus say about those who believe that He was alive even when they have not seen Him with their own eyes?
3. Who went fishing? What happened? What question did Jesus ask Peter after eating breakfast? What did Peter reply? How many times did Jesus ask the same question to Peter? Why?
4. How can you receive forgiveness of your sins? (Read 1 John 1:9.)
5. Jesus appeared to many people for forty days after He arose. Then Jesus told His disciples to be His witnesses to all the world. What does it mean to be His witnesses to all the world?
6. How can you be a witness for Jesus?
7. What happened when Jesus began to rise? Where did Jesus go? What promise do you have that Jesus will return?
8. How does Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension to heaven affect your life?
9. What is eternal life? How can you have eternal (everlasting) life with Jesus? (Read John 3:16.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS BIBLE STORY:

Choose activities that may be used in your specific situation. Consider the age and maturity of each person, locality where the story will be told (customs and traditions), and available resources, time and space.

PRESENTATION:

- Show an object moving upward, such as a helium balloon, or blowing feathers or light object(s) upward. Say, "Where is it going? Eventually it's going to come down. I'm going to tell you a story about someone going upward into the clouds."
- Using appropriate expressions, tell the Bible story in your own words.

WHO IS JESUS?

- Ask and talk about: "Who is Jesus?"
- Jesus' Life:**
 - Jesus showed that He was God's Son through His birth, His teachings, His miracles and His life.
- Jesus' Death:**
 - People rejected Jesus and crucified Him.
 - God allowed this, giving His beloved Son Jesus as the sacrifice for our sins when Jesus died on the cross.
- Jesus' Resurrection:**
 - God resurrected His Son Jesus from the grave. In other words, God overcame death by restor-

ing and giving life to Jesus.

Jesus' Ascension:

- Jesus ascended (went upward) until the disciples could not see Him. Jesus went to be with His Father in heaven, where Jesus is preparing a place for His followers, those who believe in Him.

EVERLASTING LIFE WITH JESUS

- We have hope for our lives when we trust in Jesus.
- **Pray to God, saying you:**
 - (1) **Believe** that Jesus is the Son of God who died on the cross for your sins.
 - (2) **Ask** Jesus to forgive you of your sins.
 - (3) **Accept** Jesus as Lord and Savior of your life.
- **As a result**, Jesus promises to be with you each day of your life and, when death comes, you will go and live with Jesus in heaven...everlasting life with Jesus!

FUN TIMES OF BEING TOGETHER:

- Go and fly kites together at a park or open field.
- Go fishing together at a pond, lake or river.
- Blow up helium balloons and have fun playing with them.
- Invite your family members and friends to join you.

DAILY BIBLE READING - Jn 3:16; 20:24-31; 21:1-19; Lk 24:50-53; At 1:3-11; Rev 22:7,12-13,20

1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
John 20:24-31	John 21:1-14	John 21:15-19	Luke 24:50-53	Acts 1:3-11	Revelation 22:7,12-13,20	John 3:16