

the  
Jesus   
Storybook  
Bible  
Curriculum

# The Story and the Song

Introduction from Psalm 19 and Hebrews 1

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

*The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum*  
By Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sam Shammas

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## Welcome

3 min. 

☉ Welcome the children. Ask them to hold hands in as big a circle as they can. Ask them to let go and to sit in the circle.

☉ Say: "Every time we meet I'd like you to sit in a circle. The circle is where everything is going to happen."

☉ Say: "I am going to walk around the circle when I talk to you, or I will sit in the circle to read to you. I will go to the center of the circle to show you things. You will do the same. The center of the circle is where you will show others how to do things. When we play games, we will play them in the circle. This circle is where everything will happen."

## Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

**Aim:** To expend energy and become familiar with the names of the books of the Old Testament.

**Materials:** 39 large cards with the name of a book of the Old Testament written/printed on each.

1. Put the cards in a pile in the center of the circle, making sure they are in order with Genesis at the top. Say: "I am going to place these cards in the center of the circle. Each card has the name of a book of the Bible on it. When I tap you on the shoulder, run to the center of the circle, take a card, read the name of the book of the Bible that is on the card, and then take the card back to your place and sit down."

2. Tap the children quickly on the shoulder in a random order as you walk around the circle. If they cannot read or pronounce the name on the card, help them out.

3. Once all the cards have been picked up, say: "Those are the names of the books of the Bible in the Old Testament. The Old Testament tells us about what happened before Jesus was born. We are going to play a game. Look carefully at your cards. When I call out the name of a book that you have on one of your cards, jump up, hold the card so everyone can see it, say the name of the book out loud, and sit down again. Ready?"

4. Quickly call out the names of the Old Testament books in order, allowing the child with the card to jump up and repeat the name before moving on.

5. Repeat this exercise, but this time say you will go faster. Also announce that the children need to remember the order because you are going to ask them to do this without you calling out the names.

6. Repeat again going even faster, reminding them to remember the order.

7. Repeat again, but this time announce that you will not be calling out the names. They need to stand and call out the names themselves in order from memory. Prompt as necessary.

8. Announce that you will do this one last time, but this time they should go to the center of the circle and place the cards in the center in order, so that at the end you have a pile of cards in the correct order.

9. If you have the time and can find a song that teaches the books of the Old Testament, it would be good to learn that here too, but this is optional.

10. Put the cards away. Say: "Every time we meet we are going to read a story from the Bible. We are going to start with stories from The Old Testament. I will read from this (hold up *The Jesus Storybook Bible*). It is called *The Jesus Storybook Bible*. Time for our first story."

**For larger groups:** You may want to divide the group into smaller circles, each with a teacher and a set of cards. This way the children each have a number of cards and are standing up and sitting down more often.

## Story Time

7 min. 

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 12–17 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD1 track 1, starting just over 1 minute into the track.

### Notes for Teachers on the Text

When you read chapters in the Bible such as Luke 24 or John 5, it becomes clear that the whole of the Bible is about Jesus.

In Luke 24 when the two disciples on the road to Emmaus review the career of Jesus in verses 20–21, they put the word “but” between his crucifixion and his redemption. They were saying, “He was crucified *but* we thought he would redeem.” In other words, they thought that Jesus’ death had thwarted his redemptive work. Jesus rebukes them. He says in verses 25–26: “How slow to believe ... did not the Messiah have to suffer?” Why were they so blind? Jesus says they did not believe “all that the prophets have spoken!”

Again in verse 27, Luke tells us that Jesus told them what was said about the Messiah in “all the Scriptures.” Jesus saw the Old Testament as being necessary to put his work into context and to make its meaning clear. This is seen again in verse 44, where it says Jesus was written about in “the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

Traditionally, the Old Testament is considered to have three parts—the Law (the five books of Moses), the Prophets, and the Wisdom Literature (here referred to by its chief book, the Psalms). Thus Jesus sees himself as the fulfillment of it all. Literally everything in the Bible is about him.

The Bible can only be understood if it is seen to be about him. So, Jesus fulfills the Prophets, who said the Messiah will be God (Isaiah 9), and will suffer and be killed (Isaiah 53). He fulfills all the ceremonial law since he is the sacrifice, the priest, and the temple to which all the ritual pointed. He fulfills the moral law for he alone lived it personally, exemplifying righteousness, and doing it all as our substitute, satisfying it for us. He even fulfills all the history of the Bible: he is the true prophet, the true priest, the true king to which all prophets, priests, and kings point. He is the seed of Abraham, David’s greater son, the true Jonah greater than Jonah, the true Solomon greater than Solomon.

In John 5 when Jesus is speaking to the Jewish leaders he tells them in verse 39: “You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me.” In other words, the Bible in its entirety is all about Jesus, and the basic message of the Bible is that the Messiah has to suffer in order to redeem everything.

So, the Bible is not primarily a set of rules or a philosophy of life. Rather, Jesus is telling us in Luke 24 and John 5 that the Bible is primarily an account of what’s wrong with us, of what God planned to do about it, and about what he has done about it in history through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## Understanding the Story

15 min. 

**Aim:** To understand that the whole Bible is about Jesus.

**Materials:** 3 books that are a similar size and for which you will need to make new covers (you can do this by wrapping a piece of paper around the book and writing the new title in large letters on the front and back) so that the books are retitled *The Bible*, *Rules for Life*, and *Stories of Heroes*; 2 large cards that have “Answer 1” written on them and 2 large cards that have “Answer 2” written on them; crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: “You’ll have to wait until next time to hear that beginning. In the meantime, I have some other storybooks here.”
2. Go to the center of the circle and hold up each book in turn, announcing its title. Leave the books in the center of the circle and walk around the outside of the circle for the remainder of the activity.
3. Ask: “If I want some good rules on how to live my life and the things I should and should not do, which book will I read?”
4. Ask someone to collect that book from the center of the circle and hand it to you. Whichever book they hand you, prompt them by saying, “Yes, and which other book?” (Make sure you are holding *Rules for Life* and *The Bible*.)
5. Holding up both books, say: “Both these books will tell me things I should and should not do.” Hold up *Rules for Life* and say: “But this book will give me rules and nothing else. All it will tell me are the rules.” Hold up *The Bible* and say: “But although this book does have rules in it, it is about much, much more.”
6. Ask the child to replace the books in the center of the circle.
7. Ask: “If I want to know about some really great people who did really great things, the sort of people I should copy, which book will I read?”
8. Again ask someone to collect that book from the center of the circle and hand it to you. Whichever book they hand you, prompt them by saying, “Yes, and which other book?” (Make sure you are holding *Stories of Heroes* and *The Bible*.)
9. Holding up both books, say: “Both these books will tell me the stories of heroes. I can try to copy those heroes.” Hold up *Stories of Heroes* and say: “This book will tell me all about the heroes, but that is all it will tell me.” Hold up *The Bible* and say: “But although this book does have some stories of heroes in it, it is about much, much more.”
10. Ask the child to replace the books in the center of the circle.
11. Ask: “If I want to know about God and about Jesus, which book will I read?”
12. Again ask someone to collect that book from the center of the circle and hand it to you. Holding it up, say: “The Bible will tell me all about God and all about Jesus. All the stories in the Bible, even the ones about rules and heroes, have something to say about God and about Jesus.”

13. Put the books away and announce that you are going to play a game about the Bible. Assign half the circle as team 1 and the other half as team 2. Give each team a card that says “Answer 1” on it and one that says “Answer 2” on it.

14. Explain the game: You will call out a question and then two possible answers. Each team will have 3 seconds to decide together the right answer. Then you will say “Go!” One person from each team should run with the answer to the center of the circle (they should take turns doing this).

15. Read aloud the following questions and answers; e.g., “Who wrote the Bible? Was it, Answer 1 – God or, Answer 2 – King James?” Then give the teams 3 seconds to decide on the answer before saying “Go!” This allows you to read both answers before the teams start to talk or run. Comment on their choice (e.g., “Answer 1 is correct, God wrote the Bible”) before moving on to the next question.

| QUESTION   | ANSWER 1                                     | ANSWER 2                              |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Who wrote the Bible?   | <b>God</b>                                   | King James                            |
| The word “Bible” comes from a Latin word <i>biblia</i> which means ...?<br>*   | Babies                                       | <b>Books</b>                          |
| What sort of book is the Bible?  | <b>A true story</b>                          | A fairy tale                          |
| The Bible is divided into two parts. The first part is all about what happened before Jesus was born. What is the first part named?  | The Old Pentateuch                           | <b>The Old Testament</b>              |
| The second part of the Bible is all about what happens after Jesus is born. What is the second part of the Bible named?  | Part Two                                     | <b>The New Testament</b>              |
| The Bible is made up of lots of different types of writing. There are songs and stories and letters and poems and history and lots more. So the Bible is made up of lots of books that all become one big book. How many books are there in the Bible? | <b>66 books that tell one big true story</b> | 99 books that tell one big true story |
| How many languages was the Bible first written in?<br>*  | 66 languages                                 | <b>3 languages</b>                    |
| What were the three languages the Bible was first written in?<br>*   | <b>Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek</b>            | English, Icelandic, and Latin         |
| Is the Bible mainly about ...?   | You and what you should be doing             | <b>God and what he has done</b>       |
| What is the story of the Bible about?  | <b>Jesus and God’s rescue plan</b>           | Heroes and kings                      |
| Why did God give us the Bible?   | So we could have a nice story to read        | <b>So we could know and love God</b>  |

**Note:** \* Indicates questions to skip if you are running out of time.

16. At the end of the activity, say: "You're right; God gave us the Bible so that we can know and love him."

17. Put the cards away and give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon. Say: "On the paper I am giving you, you can see a picture of a book with some sentences written on it. I will read the sentences aloud. Circle the sentences that are true about the Bible and cross out the sentences that are not true."

18. Read the four sentences on the handout aloud one by one and repeat the instructions for each one.

19. Ask: "Which sentences did you circle?"

20. Get the correct response. Say: "Correct, you should have circled 'The Bible is all about Jesus' and 'The Bible is a true story.'"

**For larger groups:** You may want to divide up the circle into more teams so they can discuss the answers in smaller groups. In this case you will need to make a set of "Answer 1"/"Answer 2" cards for each team.

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## Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “As we read the Bible together we’re going to discover that every story in the Bible tells us something about Jesus. Some of the stories may seem to be about nothing but rules. Some of them may seem to be a simple story of a great hero. Some of them may seem to be about us.”

Say: “But all of the Bible is about Jesus. Every story in the Bible whispers Jesus’ name.”

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## Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

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## Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Say: “Every time we meet we are going to pray to God. I will pray first and then anyone who wants to can pray too.”

Pray aloud, thanking God for the Bible and asking him to help you and the children learn more about Jesus as you read it.

Ask a few of the children to pray, saying thank-you to God for the Bible.

(Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance.)

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## A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

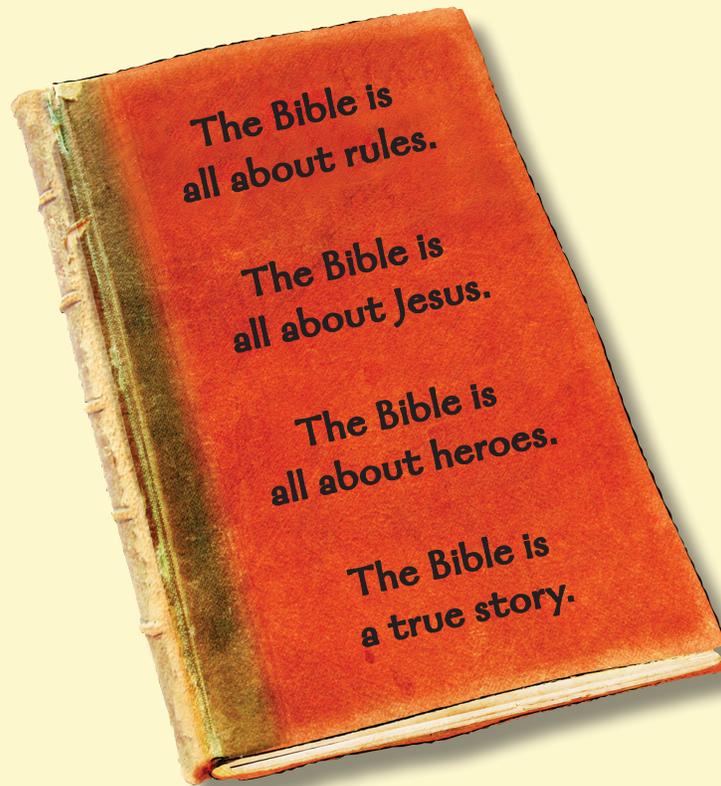
2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: “We are going to do one other thing every time we meet. At the bottom of your paper you can see a sentence or what is called a verse from the Bible. This is a verse for you to memorize at home with your parents. When you see your parents, please give them the paper you are holding and ask them to help you memorize the verse. Next time we meet we will all recite the verse together from memory.”

☉ Announce the verse: “Your verse to learn at home is from the first book of the Bible. It is the very first sentence of the very first book, Genesis 1:1, and it says — ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’”

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.



### © Jesus in the Story



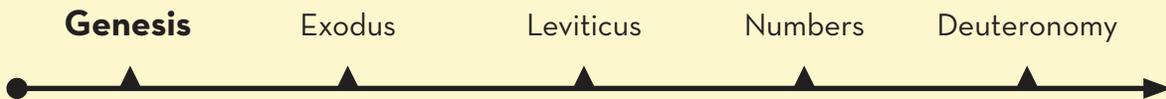
What did you discover about Jesus from this story?



Jesus

### © A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that the Bible is not mainly about us; it's about Jesus. It is not mainly about what we must do, but about what God has done.

Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of Genesis, using the diagram above.

[www.jesusstorybookbible.com](http://www.jesusstorybookbible.com)

