



ST JAMES'
Church of England
Primary School

A Bible story to illustrate our Christian values

Perseverance

The Flood Begins Genesis 7:1-10

God was sad. Very sad. Everywhere he looked, he saw people making bad choices. Hating each other. Hurting each other. Making a mess of his beautiful world.

'I need to start all over again,' God decided. 'I need to make my world clean.' And that's when he talked to Noah.

Noah was not like the rest. He was a good man and God knew it. So God told him to build a boat. A boat big enough to hold:

Noah,

his wife,

his three sons,

their wives,

a pair of every animal in the world,

and food enough to feed all of them for a very long time!

Noah's family was surprised when he told them what he was going to do.

Noah's neighbours thought it strange of him to build a boat so far from the sea.

And it wasn't easy chasing, and catching, and cleaning up after all those animals.

But Noah was a good man. He did what God told him - even when it was hard.

At last, when they were all tucked safely away in the boat, God shut the door. And then it started to rain.

It rained for forty days.

It rained for forty nights.

It rained harder than Noah had ever seen it rain before.

It rained so hard that the streams, and the rivers, and even the seas burst their banks and shores and began to flood. Soon every sandy beach, every rocky path, every patch of muddy earth had disappeared beneath the water.

And the boat began to float.

It floated above the houses. It floated above the trees. It floated above the hills, and then above the mountains too.

It floated for days and weeks and months.

And then it stopped: stuck at the top of a tall mountain.

Noah opened a window to look out. The water was going down, but the world was far from dry.

So he sent out a dove. And when the dove did not come back, Noah knew that it had found a dry place to build its nest.

'Come out!' God called finally. 'Come out of the boat! The world is dry. The world is clean. And now you and your family and all the animals must have children and fill it full of life again!'

'Hooray!' Noah celebrated. And he thanked God for saving him.

God was happy too. So he painted the world's first rainbow in the sky - to celebrate his fresh, clean world.

And to promise that he would never send a flood like that again.



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Compassion

The Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37

Jesus was teaching one day when a man in the crowd asked him a question.

'Can you tell me, Jesus, what I have to do to live forever?'

Jesus smiled. 'Love God,' he answered, 'and love your neighbour as much as you love yourself.'

'But who is my neighbour?' asked the man, hoping to trick Jesus. 'Is he just the fellow who lives next door?'

'Let me tell you a story,' Jesus said, 'and I think you will understand.'

'Once upon a time, there was a man - a man like any one of us - who was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho. Now as you all know, that is a very dangerous road. It's twisty and it's steep, and there's no end of places for robbers and thieves to hide. Well, the robbers were waiting that day. And they grabbed the man. And they beat him. And they took his money and left him to die.'

'Oh dear,' sighed the crowd. They felt sorry for the man.

Jesus went on with his story.

'In a little while, another man came walking down that road - a priest, on his way home from worshipping God at the Temple. He saw the dying man, and what do you think he did?'

'He helped him!' shouted someone in the crowd.

'He saved him!' shouted another.

'No!' said Jesus, firmly. 'He did not. He took one look at that poor, beaten man, then crossed to the other side of road and walked away.'

'Oh my,' the crowd murmured.

'Wait,' Jesus continued. 'Soon another man passed by. He served God at the Temple too. So what do you think this man did when he saw the wounded traveller?'

'He ran for help!' shouted someone.

'He raised the alarm!' shouted another.

'No!' said Jesus, again. 'He did not. Just like the priest, he crossed to the other side of the road and left that poor man to die.'

'Oh no,' the crowd sighed.

'Don't worry,' said Jesus. 'For there was one more man who passed by that day. And he was a Samaritan.'

'A Samaritan?' shouted someone. 'They're different from us!'

'We hate Samaritans!' shouted another.

'And they hate us!' added a third.

'So I've heard,' nodded Jesus. But when this Samaritan saw the man, he did not walk away. No. He bandaged his wounds. He loaded him on donkey. He took him to a nearby inn. And he paid for that man to stay there until he was well.'

Jesus looked at the man who had asked him the question. 'So tell me,' he said, 'which of these men was a neighbour to the man who had been robbed?'

'The third one. The Samaritan,' the man answered.

'That's right,' Jesus smiled. 'Because my neighbour is anyone who needs my help. Now you go and help your neighbour too.'



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Honesty

Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10

'Jesus is coming!' somebody shouted. 'Jesus is coming to Jericho!' And everybody ran to meet him. Well, almost everybody. For there was one man - one wee little man - who did not run to meet Jesus. And his name was Zacchaeus.

It's not that Zacchaeus didn't want to see Jesus. He did. He really did. But, not only was Zacchaeus short, he was also afraid of the crowd. Not many people liked him, you see. Partly because he was a tax collector. But mostly because he collected more taxes than he was supposed to - and kept what was left for himself.

'Jesus is here!' somebody shouted. 'Jesus is here in Jericho!' And everybody cheered as he walked through the city gates.

Well, almost everybody. For Zacchaeus did not feel like cheering at all. He wanted to see Jesus. He really did. But how could he walk out there in front of all those people he'd cheated? And what would they do if they got hold of him? Then Zacchaeus had an idea. There were trees by the city gates - tall, leafy trees. If he could sneak behind the crowd and climb one of those trees, he could see Jesus - and not be seen himself!

So off he went - out of his house and through the empty streets. And because the crowd was watching Jesus, he had no trouble at all slipping behind them and shinning up a tree.

'Come, eat at my house!' somebody shouted. 'Come, eat at my house, Jesus!' And because it was a great honour to host someone as important as Jesus, everybody shouted at once. Well, almost everybody.

For there was one man - one wee little man - who kept his mouth shut and tried hard not to rustle the branches.

'Thank you very much,' said Jesus. 'You are very kind. But I have already decided where I will eat my dinner.' Then Jesus looked straight at the trees and called, 'Zacchaeus! Zacchaeus, come down! I'm eating at your house today.'

'Zacchaeus?' somebody shouted. 'Jesus is eating with Zacchaeus? He's the worst man in town. There must be some mistake!' And everybody moaned and groaned.

Well, almost everybody. One man - one wee little man - climbed down from the tree, as shocked as the rest. Why would someone as good as Jesus want to eat with someone bad like him? But he was happy too. Happier than he'd been for a long, long time. And so, with a smile spreading across his face, Zacchaeus led Jesus to his house.

'What are they saying?' somebody whispered. 'What are they doing in there?' And everybody gathered around the taxman's door.

That's when Zacchaeus threw open his door with a bang!

'Greetings, everyone!' he shouted. 'I have an announcement to make. I've been talking with my new friend, Jesus, and realize that there are a few things I need to change. I've cheated some of you. I admit that. And I want you to know that I'm sorry. So sorry, in fact, that I will pay you back four times more than I stole from you! What's more, I intend to sell half of what I own and give the money to the poor!'

The crowd was shocked. Never, in their whole lives, had they seen anyone change like that! They stood there with their mouths wide open.

And nobody said a thing.

Well, almost nobody.

Don't you see?' said Jesus to the crowd. 'God has sent me to share his love with everybody - even those who have done some very bad things. That's what I have done. And now Zacchaeus loves God too.'

That's when the crowd began to cheer. Jesus. And Zacchaeus. And the whole town of Jericho.

Everybody.



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Forgiveness

An Unforgiving Servant Matthew 18:21-35

Peter asked Jesus a question.

'If somebody hurts me,' he said, 'and then says, "I'm really sorry", how many times should I forgive him and say, "Hey, that's OK"?''

Before Jesus could answer, however, Peter offered an answer of his own.

He thought it would sound good.

He thought it would sound big-hearted.

He thought it would be the kind of thing Jesus would like to hear.

'Should I forgive him... seven times?' he said.

It seemed like a lot of times to Peter. But Jesus was not impressed.

'No,' answered Jesus. 'Not seven times. But seventy TIMES seven times!'

Peter did some quick sums. That was a lot of times. A whole lot of times! More times than Peter had ever forgiven anybody.

So Jesus told him a story.

'Once there was a king. And one of his servants owed him money.

Not a little money. Not lots of money. But loads and loads and loads of money - millions and millions and more!

One day the servant was brought before the king. And because he could not pay what he owed, the king commanded that the man and his family should be sold as slaves.

The servant fell to his knees.

"I'm really sorry!" he cried. "Be patient with me, please. Just give me another chance. And I promise I will pay back everything I owe."

The king looked at his servant. He felt sorry for him. And then, much to the servant's surprise, the king smiled and said, "Hey, that's OK." Then he called off the debt, and set him free.

The servant left the palace, celebrating. And that's when he ran into another servant - a servant who owed HIM money.

Not loads of money. Not a lot of money, either. A couple of coins - that's all.

Did the first servant remember what the king had done for him? Not for a minute. He grabbed the second servant by the throat and demanded to be paid.

So the second servant fell to his knees.

"I'm really sorry!" he cried. "Be patient with me, please. Give me another chance and I will pay back everything I owe."

But instead of saying, "Hey, that's OK," the first servant had the second servant thrown into jail!

Word of this got back to the king. And he was so angry that he had the first servant dragged before him again.

"When you came to me and said, 'I'm really sorry,' I called off your debt and said, 'Hey, that's OK.' Why couldn't you do the same?"

And with that, the king had the servant thrown into jail until he could repay what he owed.'

Jesus looked at his friend. 'God is like that king. "I'm really sorry." That's what we say to him - more times than we can count. And even more times than that, he tells us "Hey, that's OK." And all he really wants is for us to tell that to each other too.'

'I'm really sorry,' said Peter. 'I didn't understand.'

And Jesus just smiled and said, 'Hey, that's OK.'



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Peace

Jesus Stops a Storm Mark 4:35-41

It was a perfect day.

The sky was blue. The lake too.

And a gentle breeze whipped the wave tips white and foamy.

Jesus sat at the side of the lake and talked to the people about God.

'God is your Father,' he said. 'He dresses the flowers in beautiful colours. He makes sure the birds have enough to eat. But you are his sons and his daughters. Don't you think he can clothe and feed you too? So trust him, and stop worrying your lives away.'

When Jesus had finished teaching, he was tired. So he called his closest friends, and together they piled into a boat and set off across the lake for home.

Jesus yawned. He stretched. He laid his head down and, to the rhythm of the waves and the rocking of the boat, he fell asleep. It was the perfect end to a perfect day!

And then, suddenly, the day was not so perfect.

The sky turned black. The lake too.

And a wild wind stirred the waves up tall and stormy.

The boat rocked right. The boat rocked left. The boat rocked up and down. The boat rocked so hard, in fact, that Jesus' friends were sure they would all drown.

But Jesus slept right through it - except for the odd snuffle and snore.

'Jesus!' his friends called at last. 'Jesus! Wake up! We're all going to drown!'

So Jesus woke up. Then he sat up. Then he rubbed his eyes and he stood up. It was all anybody else could do to stay on their feet. But Jesus stood up! And then, very calmly he said to the wind,

'Quiet now.' And he said to the waves, 'Settle down.'

And they did!

Then Jesus turned to his friends and said, 'You didn't need to be frightened. You didn't have to worry. All you had to do was trust me. See, everything is calm'

And so it was. The sky was blue. The lake too. And the little waves splashed happily at the side of the boat. It was a perfect day again!



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Courage

David and Goliath 1 Samuel 17

Goliath was big. He had to stoop to get through door ways. His head was always bumping up against the ceiling. And his friends thought twice before inviting him to dinner.

Goliath had a big spear. Ten feet long, at least. With a big iron point. And his big bronze armour weighed a hundred pounds or more.

Goliath had a big voice, too.

And, one day, he used it. He stamped out in front of his army of Philistines and shouted across the valley to the soldiers camped on the other side.

'I am Goliath!' he bellowed. 'And I dare any of you to come and fight me. Win the fight, and we will be your slaves. Lose, and you must work for us.'

David was little.

Just a boy, really, who looked after the sheep. When he wanted a break from that, he carried cheese to his brothers in the army. And that's what he was doing one day, when he heard Goliath shout.

David was a little angry.

'Who does that giant think he is?' huffed David. 'Doesn't he know that the Lord God himself watches over us? Why, with God's help, even I could beat that bully.'

So David took a little walk. He went to see the king.

'I want to fight the giant,' he announced. The king almost fell off his throne.

'But you are so little.' said the king. 'And he is so big!'

'A lion is big,' answered David. 'And so is a bear. But when they came after my sheep, the Lord God helped me face them and fight them off. He will do the same with this giant.'

'All right,' the king agreed. 'But at least let me lend you my armour.' The armour was big. Too big. And so heavy that David could hardly move.

So he gave it back. And picked up five little stones instead. And a sling. And his trusty shepherd's staff.

Goliath gave a big laugh when he saw the little shepherd boy.

And he took two big steps.

David ran a little way.

Two more giant steps for Goliath.

And David ran a little further.

They were in the middle of the valley now, and everything was quiet.

Goliath roared a big roar, sucked in a big breath of air, and raised his big spear.

David sneaked his little hand into his little pouch, pulled out a little stone and slipped it in his sling. Then he spun it round his head and let it fly.

And before the giant could say another word, the stone struck him on the head, and he fell with a big thud to the ground.

David's side shouted a big 'Hooray!'

Goliath's side whispered a little 'Uh-oh'

And from then on, some pretty big things happened to the little shepherd boy. He was given a king's reward. He was promised the hand of the king's daughter in marriage. And, one day, he became king himself!

The very best king God's people ever had.