



SESSION **4** OF 4

# Ascension



**MEETING AIM**

To share the challenge Jesus gave his disciples when he was preparing to leave them, and to explore how we can take Jesus' story out with us wherever we go.



**BIBLE PASSAGE**

Acts 1:1-11



**BACKGROUND**

This is a story scant on detail, begging questions as to how prepared or otherwise the disciples must have felt as Jesus ended his time on earth. In this text, we see Jesus passing the baton on to those who had been closest to him, preparing them to take his message out into the world. Through this session, we explore how we, too, are invited to take the story out and pass the baton on.

**CIRCLE TIME**



As you begin the session, invite the children to sit together in a circle and give out your refreshments. Encourage the children to share their stories and news from the week and celebrate special events that have taken place, such as birthdays. Ask the children if they can think of a time when they have had to say goodbye. Was it a sad goodbye or a good goodbye? What helps us say goodbye?

**INTRO ACTIVITY**



**You will need: something to use as a baton**

Arrange the children in small groups and give each team a baton ready to run some simple relay races. Depending on the children, you may choose to set this up as an obstacle race, or as a straightforward running race, but ensure that you use a baton to pass on to the next runner each time. Explain to the group that during this session we will be looking at what happened when Jesus' time on earth came to a close, and how he passed the baton on to his disciples to continue his work after he had returned to heaven.

**BIBLE STORY**



**You will need: felt shapes to use for the telling of the story: a blue background for the sky, a green piece to represent the ground, Jesus and disciples, angels, clouds**

Depending on the size of your group, you will need to decide whether to lay the story out on the floor between you and the children or put it up on display, perhaps using an easel. Spread the background out and gather the children so they can all see. As you begin the story, lay the green grass at the foot of the picture and slowly set out the people figures, gathered together around Jesus to one side of the scene. Tell the following story:

When Jesus rose from the dead, he spent 40 days on earth. He would appear and talk to his disciples once again, reminding them of the things he had taught them. He told his disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for God's promised Holy Spirit. Jesus' disciples still had questions for Jesus; they were still waiting for him to become king and wanted to know when Jesus would finish the work he had started. Jesus told them that only Father God knew how the story would end, and that everything would happen in God's perfect timing.

One day, Jesus gathered his friends together. *Move the figures to the centre of the scene.* He told them he would be returning home to Father God in heaven. But the disciples' work was not yet complete. Jesus told them they were to wait for the Holy Spirit and then they should take Jesus' story out to the whole world, telling people all over about the work Jesus had done on earth, and about his death and resurrection.

When he had said this, Jesus was taken up into the clouds. *Move the shapes appropriately.* He was hidden from the people. The disciples looked up into the sky, and as they waited two angels appeared. *Add these figures to the scene.* They told the disciples not to wait there for Jesus. He had returned to heaven, and one day he would come back the same way. This would be the last time the disciples would ever see Jesus on earth, but they knew they still had work to do. They would wait for the Holy Spirit to come before they went out to share his story the world over.

**CHATTING TOGETHER**



Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to contribute:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- What questions do you have about it?
- How do you think the disciples would have felt when Jesus left them?
- What does it mean for us to wait for Jesus to return?

**CREATIVE RESPONSE**



**You will need: a crown; a globe; a house; a clock; some playdough**

Gather the children together around the first four items above and ask them to choose something that stands out after hearing the story. Which of these objects speaks to them the most? What did they hear in the story that made them think about this?

Provide some playdough so the children can create their own object if they prefer. Gather the children's chosen or created symbols and look together at how the objects help to tell us the story. Which of these objects challenge us? How might God be talking to us through these symbols?

**PRAYER**



As you gather to pray, stand together in a circle, facing inwards and holding hands if the children are happy to do so. Begin by praying for the children in the group. Then invite them to share their own prayers, thanking God for the things they have discovered during this session. Pray specifically that the Holy Spirit would come and fill each of us with the same power he gave the first disciples. Now turn the circle around and face outwards. Pray that we would have the courage we need to take Jesus' story out into the world and share him with our friends and family this week.

**BECKY MAY**

is a writer who has worked with children and young people for many years, in a variety of different settings. She is the co-founder of The Treasure Box People.