

WEEK 1

Jesus is rejected in Nazareth



BIG IDEA

Jesus came to set people free.



BIBLE

Luke 4:1–30



HOME DISCIPLESHIP

As you prepare this week, the two passages and two questions that the children have been encouraged to consider during the week are:

Children read	Children ask
Luke 4:1–13	How did Jesus beat the devil?
Luke 4:14–30	Name three things you find out about Jesus.

If these home readings were not handed out in time due to this being the first week of the program, it's fine for them to be skipped. Note that verses 1–13 are background reading and that the lesson focuses on verses 14–30.



LEADER'S PREPARATION

These notes are designed to help leaders prepare. An empty Teaching target template is also available for leaders to use as a first step.

 PRAYER	<p>Prayer</p> <p>Father in heaven, thank you for your word. Please guide and transform me as I prepare, that I might know, love and obey you more and more. Help me teach clearly and faithfully so that these children might know, love and obey you too. Amen.</p>
 CONTEXT	<p>Context</p> <p>Chapters 1–3 include Luke’s infancy narrative, the baptism with John the Baptist, and Jesus’ genealogy. At Jesus’ baptism, the Holy Spirit descends on Jesus, along with God’s words. This clearly identifies Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah and affirms his use of the Isaiah prophecy in chapter 4 that begins, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me ...’ (v 18). In chapter 4 Jesus returns to Galilee after his temptation in the wilderness.</p> <p>Jesus reads from Isaiah (61:1–2 and 58:6) verses that speak of God’s chosen servant who will bring freedom and blessing.</p> <p>In verses 25–27, Jesus refers to Elijah (1 Kings 17) and Elisha (2 Kings 5), examples of God blessing non-Israelite people. The suggestion is that God’s plan for salvation is worldwide, not limited to the Jewish people.</p>
 STRUCTURE	<p>Structure</p> <p>Verses 14–15: Setting</p> <p>Verses 16–21: Jesus reads from Isaiah and claims it is fulfilled today</p> <p>Verses 22–27: Interaction with the crowd</p> <p>Verses 28–30: Response of the crowd</p>
 BIG IDEA	<p>Big idea</p> <p>Jesus came to set people free.</p>

 <p>SUPPORTING IDEAS</p>	<p>Supporting ideas</p> <p>Jesus fulfils the promises in the Old Testament.</p> <p>Jesus sets the agenda for his ministry.</p> <p>Jesus is aligned with the Old Testament and is not seeking to disregard it or change it.</p> <p>Jesus' actions are unexpected. He will not compromise his mission in order to keep people happy.</p> <p>The crowds drive him out of the town, yet Jesus is unharmed.</p>
 <p>APPLICATION THEN</p>	<p>Application then</p> <p>People had to adjust their idea about who/what the Messiah was going to be and what he would do. People needed to look to Jesus as the one who could help them.</p>
 <p>APPLICATION NOW</p>	<p>Application now</p> <p>We know that Jesus has come to preach the good news of God's kingdom and set people free. We can look to Jesus as the one who can help us (that is, we can pray).</p>

COMMON QUESTIONS

Why are the people angry with Jesus in verses 28–29?

Jesus quotes Isaiah in verses 18–19, hinting at his identity as God's chosen Messiah. The crowd is initially willing to accept this, though it's unclear whether their question 'Isn't he Joseph's son?' suggests that they are confirming his Davidic ancestry, or downplaying his importance as an everyday person with no real significance. Jesus pre-empts requests for healings and miracles as evidence (v 23). He predicts his rejection by his own people as he reminds them of Elijah and the widow in Zarephath and Elisha healing Naaman. These are prophets whom God used to bless people beyond the borders of Israel.

How does Jesus escape when so many people want to kill him?

Luke doesn't explain this. However there are similar moments in John's Gospel where John says 'his hour had not yet come' (John 8:20; 7:30; see also 10:39). That Jesus did escape against the odds demonstrates God's sovereignty, as does all of Jesus' earthly ministry.



Choose one of these activities to introduce this week's content. These activities provide connection with the children at the start of the group and introduce an aspect of what they will be looking at in the Bible this week.

1. Who deserves to be rescued?

In order to prepare the children to consider the Jew/Gentile divide, this activity invites them to consider who is 'worthy' of salvation. Show several pictures of people/roles known to the children, both appealing and unappealing (firefighter, teacher, familiar member of the church, thief, well-known TV villain). Ask the children to imagine: if these people were all stuck on a deserted island, who deserves to be rescued? Why/Why not?

- **LINK** This activity prepares children to understand the Jew/Gentile divide that was an important part of the social context of this Bible story. The Jews generally considered the Gentiles as 'lesser' and unworthy of God's blessing and salvation. Note: It's OK for children to feel the injustice of this; it's what makes Jesus' words in this passage so wonderful (and controversial in his day).

2. Who am I?

Play a short, adjusted version of 20 questions where the children need to guess the person/role based on a series of clues about what they do. Example: 'Arrests people who break the law', 'Wears a uniform' could be clues for 'police officer'. Knowing what people do helps us understand who they are.

- **LINK** In the Bible passage, Jesus uses Isaiah to show what he will do, and that reveals who he is. Prepare the children to look for what Jesus says he will do and how that might reveal more about him.



BIG IDEA

Jesus came to set people free.

Key points to consider as you prepare:

- Jesus is the hero of every story in the Gospels. Keep the focus on who he is and what he came to do.
- Consider explaining what Jesus frees people from and what he frees them for. This is an idea that can be developed over the term. Freedom in Luke's Gospel is release from the effects and penalty of sin. It is freedom into new life with Jesus as King.
- In the Isaiah passage, the Spirit-anointed one brings freedom for prisoners, the blind, the oppressed and the poor. These are images of sin and brokenness, visible evidence of sin in the world.
- Consider how much contextual information the children in your group will need about Isaiah, Elijah, Elisha and the Jew/Gentile divide.
- This week introduces the Big idea for this term as well as this lesson. It is fine if children do not grasp everything straightaway.
- Use a Big question to frame the first five lessons. This could be: 'Who is Jesus?'
- This passage shows Jesus returning to his hometown. He is beginning to be widely known. In quoting Isaiah, Jesus is saying he is more than just 'Joseph's son' (v 22). This leads to the question, who is he? What did he come to do? If he is more than Joseph's son, what can we expect? Jesus has already given the answer in quoting Isaiah: he has come to set people free.

ENGAGE

- Pictures that you can use during the talk are in this lesson's folder:



- Create a simple scroll from a rolled-up piece of brown paper to show the group as you retell the story.
- Use the simple Gospel symbols pictures of a happy face and a sad face to show the reactions of the crowd and how they change.



- It is always recommended that you read some verses directly from the passage. You may choose more or less verses depending on the age of your group and the particular passage.

APPLY



Head—Know that Jesus fulfils what God promised through the prophets.
He is the one God promised to send to set people free.



Heart—God loves the world so much that he sent Jesus, his own Son.
This is such wonderful news that it makes us feel like jumping for joy.



Hands—Jesus is really important, so it's good to find out more about him by reading the Bible and asking God to help us understand. We can also turn to God in prayer, knowing he loves us and wants to help us.

PRAYER

Prayer can be call-and-response, or you may wish to invite a child to come and read the prayer for everyone.

Father in Heaven,

Thank you for sending Jesus to set people free.

Please help us to turn to Jesus when we need help.

How wonderful that you are always reaching out to love us.

In Jesus name,

Amen.



DISCUSS THE BIBLE

Keep in mind that during the week children read Luke 4:1–30, considered ‘How did Jesus beat the devil?’ and named three things they found out about Jesus.

Choose up to six questions from the following options (depending on the size and age of your group, and the time available). Questions are designed to start conversations and allow children to deepen their understanding.

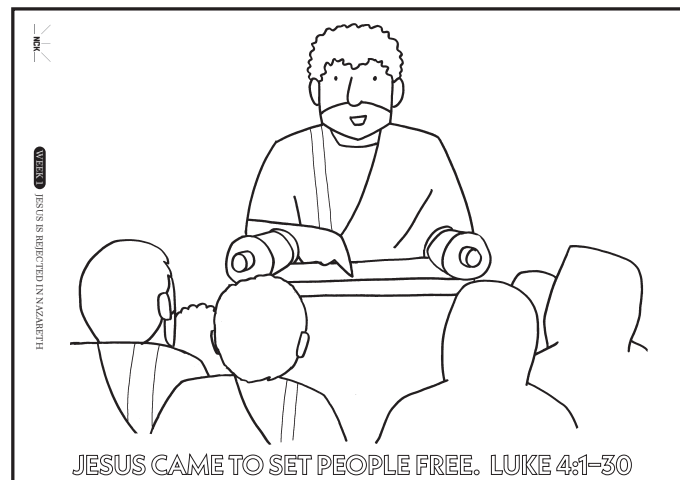
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

<p>Context questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ What do we know about where Jesus was? (vv 14–16) ☐ Jesus read from the book of Isaiah in the Old Testament. What do we remember about Isaiah? ☐ This Bible passage mentions prophets. What are prophets and what did they do? ☐ Refer to a Bible timeline, locating the Gospels. Remind the children of parts of the Old Testament that will help them understand this story: the promises to Abraham, Elijah and Elisha, Isaiah. 	<p>Understanding questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Jesus said that this part of Isaiah is about him. What should we expect to see him doing if that is true? (Leaders could provide some answers for children to agree or disagree with.) ☐ The people said to each other, 'Isn't this Joseph's son?' Do you think they were right or wrong? (From what Jesus has told them, he is much more than Joseph's son; he is God's Son, the Messiah.) ☐ Jesus reminds the people of two Old Testament stories about non-Israelite people being blessed by God. What kind of Saviour does that suggest he is going to be? ☐ I wonder ... what made the people so mad at Jesus? ☐ I wonder ... how Jesus managed to walk away when they all wanted to kill him?
<p>Big idea questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ What does this story tell us about what Jesus came to do? ☐ If you were there to see this happen and you followed Jesus, what would you expect to see him doing after this? ☐ Finish this sentence using verses 18–19: Jesus came to ... 	<p>Application questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Does the picture of Jesus from this story match what I think Jesus is like? ☐ In what ways can Jesus set us free? ☐ The people who heard Jesus say these things got angry. How do you feel about what Jesus said?



ACTIVITIES AND CRAFT

- Choose from the activity options in the unit introduction.
- In the printables folder, there is a **Colouring page** provided for the lesson, with the Bible reference and Big idea included.



- The Colouring page extension for this week is to show the children how to roll the paper up to make a scroll. Tie it closed with a ribbon and send the page home as a scroll.