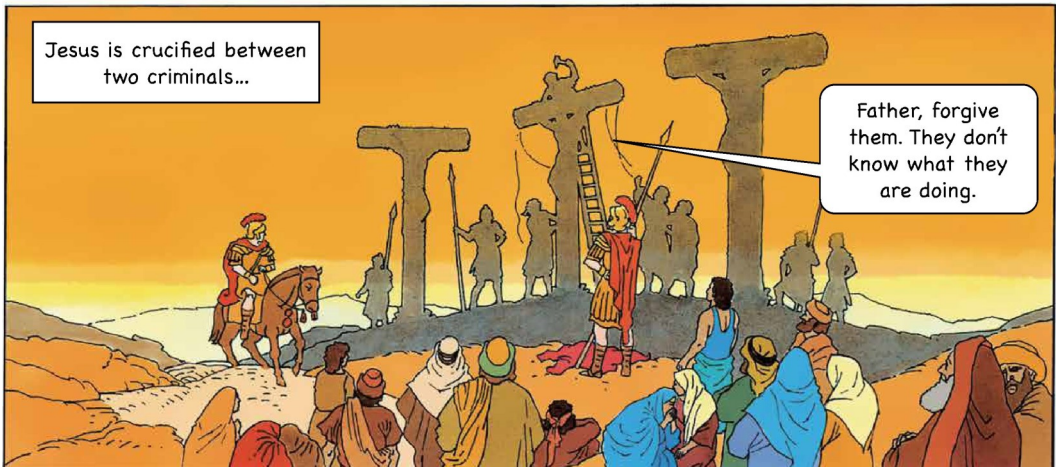
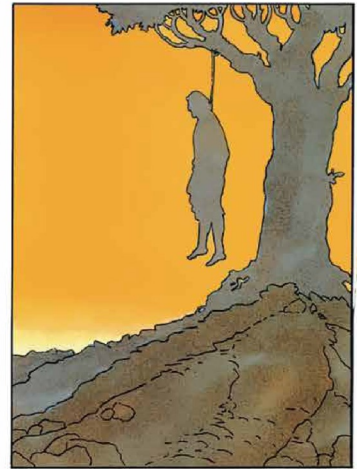
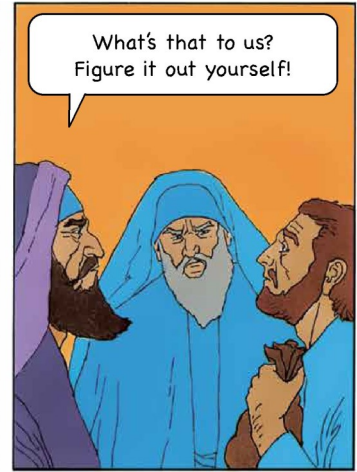
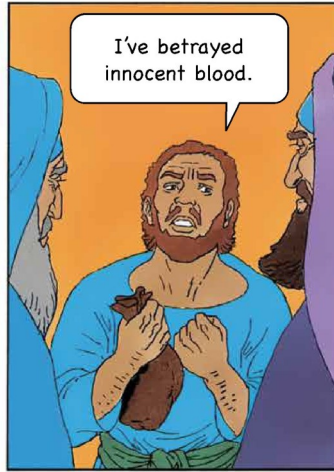


CURSED

READ FOR YOURSELF: Matthew 27:3-10 and Luke 23:32-34





CURSED

Judas Iscariot is one of the twelve. He also has been chosen by Jesus. He also is loved and wanted by Him. But getting profit is worth more to him than his Master. He betrays Jesus with a kiss.

But when Judas realizes what he has done, he regrets it. Even so, this regret does not bring him back to Jesus. Not to the cross where he can receive forgiveness. He never really believed in Jesus and His grace. That is why he takes his life into his own hands and hangs himself.

The Lord Jesus also is hanged. He doesn't take His life by His own hands. He gives Himself over to God. He desires the best for you and me, even for His enemies. That is why He hangs on the cross. He says: 'Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing'.

The cross contrasts to all people who only care about themselves. You can join the self-willed people who think that they can do it all without God's help. You can reject Jesus and His cross. But why not accept God's offer? The Lord Jesus carried your punishment on the cross.

The cross leads to a crossroads in everybody's life. It means a choice:

Do I desire to go my own way?

Or do I desire to go with Jesus?

And do I surrender myself over to God's grace?

And do I trust He will give me what He has promised?

MEMORY VERSE

"But by becoming a curse for us Christ has redeemed us from the curse that the Law brings."

(Galatians 3:13a)

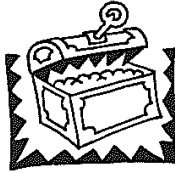
WHO IS JESUS?

Lord of Glory

"The wisdom I proclaim is God's hidden wisdom, which He had already chosen for our glory even before the world was made. None of the rulers of this world knew this wisdom. If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

(1 Corinthians 2:7-8)

Jesus went the way of the cross, because He knew that this would bring the highest form of glory. His suffering and death would turn into a mighty victory. He is the Lord of glory. You and me are allowed to be part of that glory.



TIP

Do not be afraid of trouble. Jesus has carried the curse. You are now privileged to have His blessing.

NOT A CURSE, BUT A BLESSING!

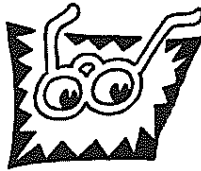
Sin causes all kinds of misery. You feel guilty. You feel ashamed of yourself. You are afraid of punishment and judgement. All of those things no longer belong in your life if you live with Jesus. You know that He has taken the curse of the sin upon Himself.

When Satan accuses you and makes you think that there is no pardon for you, do not listen to him. Look into the eyes of Jesus, who is looking into yours. He was hanged on the cursed wood, and He says, 'I love you and My Father pardons you. Come!'

OLD TREASURES

"Because a dead body hanging on a post brings God's curse on the land." (Deuteronomy 21:23b)

The Law of Moses talks about the death penalty of hanging on a pole (post). That means it is really bad for such a criminal: he is cursed by God. The Jews did not want to give any person such a terrible punishment and that is why in practice, nobody got hanged, until the Romans introduced Crucifixion. When Jesus hangs on the dead wood of a cross, He is struck by God's curse. Through this, Jesus fulfills the law. He becomes cursed, so that we are never cursed by God again. Instead of cursed we are now being blessed.



EXTRA INFORMATION

Thorns and thistles

In Genesis 3:17-18 the Lord God says that the earth is cursed and that is why it will bring forth thorns and thistles. The Lord Jesus gets a crown of thorns pressed on his head. The soldiers do this to mock this 'King'. They do not know that they are actually showing that Jesus is carrying the curse of the world.

Jesus has freed us from the curse that sin has caused. When He returns, He will also take away the curse that is troubling the whole creation.

That is why we read in Isaiah 55:13:

"Cypress trees will grow where now there are briars; myrtle trees will come up in place of thorns. This will be a sign that will last forever, a reminder of what I, the Lord, have done."



DO YOU KNOW...?

1. Where does Judas throw down the money that he gets for delivering Jesus (Matthew 27:5)?

2. What does being hanged mean in the Old Testament?

3. What do the thorns and thistles in Genesis 3:18 represent?

4. What does the crown of thorns that Jesus wears represent?

5. What do the leaders of the world not know when they crucify Jesus (1 Corinthians 2:7):

- a) That Judas has betrayed Jesus?
- b) That someone who gets hanged is cursed?
- c) That the death of Jesus brings glory to the people?

6. How long has God already had His plan with Jesus (1 Corinthians 2:7)?

7. Look at the picture story. What are Jesus' first words when He gets hanged on the cross?

BIBLE READING

Sun	Matthew 27:3-10
Mon	Luke 23:32-34
Tue	1 Corinthians 2:6-9
Wed	Genesis 3:8-19
Thu	Romans 8:15-25
Fri	Hebrews 10:26-31
Sat	Hebrews 10:32-39



ACTION POINT!

Draw a mountain with a large cross.

Write all kinds of sins on the cross.

Remember that Jesus has taken all of your sins upon Himself dying on the cross.

He wants you to leave all of your sins there. God will not think of them anymore!