

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



GOD HAS A PLAN (ACTION STORY)

Luke 5:17-26 Jesus forgives and heals a paralysed man

Each child will need:

- Two pipe cleaners, string, scissors, sticky tape (optional)
- A5 paper; or print out the mat template (optional)
- Pens/pencils

You will need:

- Two pipe cleaners, string, scissors, sticky tape (optional)
- A5 paper; or a print-out of the mat template
- Send a copy of the mat to each child or give a print-out (optional)

<https://www.123homeschool4me.com/four-friends-helped>

This month we will be exploring some different parts of Jesus' story which help demonstrate how wonderful the Bible is and help us understand how we too are part of God's big story. Jesus performed many miracles during his ministry to show God's love and power. Today is about sharing how the Bible has some great action stories.

Start It

Play a game with lots of action in it called 'Beans'. Each child walks about their space; when you shout the following, they have to do the appropriate action:

- 'French beans!': *shout 'Ooh la la', and swing their hips*
- 'Runner beans!': *run about the room*
- 'Broad beans!': *stretch their arms out wide*
- 'Jumping beans!': *jump up and down*
- 'Haricot beans!': *hop around the room*
- 'Beans on toast!': *lie flat on the floor*
- 'Dwarf beans!': *crouch down and duck-walk*
- 'String beans!': *put hands in air*
- 'Frozen beans!': *'freeze'*
- 'Chilli beans!': *stand and shiver*

Once you've played the game, ask the children if they can name some good action movies. For example: *The Lego Movie, Big Hero 6, How to Train your Dragon, The Incredibles, Spy Kids, Brave, Superman, The Amazing Spider-Man, Night at the Museum.*

🗨 **Say:** Did you know there are actions stories in the Bible? And some of the stories have been made into movies too.

Play a game of Charades to act out two action stories and have the children guess what the stories are; or you can describe a story and they can guess who the person of action is. You can choose two from these or you can add your own.

Moses:

This person of action frees his people from slavery when God parts a huge sea so they can go through and escape. The sea then closes and drowns the Egyptian army. This person leads the people through the desert and then goes up a mountain, but the people are too scared to follow so they wait at the bottom. This person goes up through fire and smoke, and then God speaks to them. The person returns carrying some tablets with God's commandments on them.

Noah:

At the time of this story, God is not happy that people are acting very wickedly and so he decides to destroy the world with a flood. The person of action in this story has to build a huge boat and put in it two of every creature in the world plus this person's family. People laugh at this. But then it rains for 40 days and 40 nights and soon the Earth is covered with water. They all live on the boat for one year, one month, and 27 days!

Samson:

This person of action helps free the people from the Philistines. This person is incredibly strong and was able to kill a lion with only their bare hands and defend themselves against 1,000 Philistines. The Philistines are constantly trying to find out what the secret is behind this person's strength. This person's partner knows the secret, that the strength is in the hair, and cuts it so the person can be captured and tied to the pillars of a temple. But this person's strength comes back so that they pushed the pillars apart and the temple comes tumbling down on them all.

Jonah:

God is disappointed that the people of a big city are not living a good way, so he sends this person of action to go and speak with them. But this person does not want to go, so gets on a boat. And because that wasn't what God asked this person to do, God sends a storm. Once the other people on the boat figure out who is the reason for the terrible storm, they throw the person in the sea, where a big fish swallows them. The person is in the belly of the fish for three days before being spat out on to a beach; then they return to do as God had wanted.

Ruth:

This person's partner dies and, as the marriage is over, they are meant to return to their own family. But this would mean their mother-in-law would have no one to protect her. So this person takes action and decides to stay with her and take care of her. Together they travel the long way to Bethlehem which is risky especially as this person is a foreigner in these lands. Despite the danger, this person stays and works hard to find food and shelter to support them both. Other people are amazed by the hard work, love and devotion that this person shows during this difficult time. This person is honoured because of this and is invited to join a new family.

Tell It

- **Say:** Today's story is another action story in the Bible – it is about a man who was paralysed. Being paralysed means that he couldn't walk and probably couldn't use his legs. He would have had to sit or lie down all the time.
- **Say:** Just think for a minute how hard it would be if you couldn't walk around. How would you go to the bathroom? What kind of games would you play? How easy would it be to make friends?
- **Say:** This story takes place a few days after Jesus had touched a man who had leprosy and made him better. Jesus was going from town to town performing miracles and everyone wanted to see him. So as Jesus entered one of the homes in Capernaum, people quickly gathered around him. So many people came that there was no room left, not even outside the door.

Ask: Have you ever been in a room where it is so crowded you can hardly move?

- **Say:** Four men, who were friends with the paralysed man, heard that Jesus was in town.

They decided to carry their paralysed friend on a mat to Jesus, to see if their friend could be healed. As soon as they got to the house where Jesus was, however, it was so crowded that they realised that they wouldn't be able to get through.

🗨️ **Say:** So someone decided they should carry their friend on to the roof of the building that Jesus was in! That might sound impossible, but houses were built differently then. Most houses had staircases outside to get to the flat roof.

🗨️ **Say:** The Bible says that after digging through the roof, the men lowered the paralysed man on his mat down to where Jesus was.

Ask: How do you think you would have felt if you were in the house listening carefully to Jesus, when all of a sudden you hear something coming from above you. You look up and the ceiling is crumbling a bit and everyone stops and looks up.

🗨️ **Say:** I'm sure Jesus was smiling as the man was being lowered down. These men were so sure that Jesus would be able to heal him; otherwise they wouldn't have gone to so much trouble.

🗨️ **Say:** The first thing Jesus said when he saw that they all believed was, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' Probably not what the man expected since he came to Jesus because he wanted to walk.

🗨️ **Say:** However, Jesus knew what this man needed most because he knew what was in his heart. Jesus knew that being paralysed would be difficult, but it was even worse not to be forgiven.

🗨️ **Say:** Well, some of the teachers of the law heard Jesus forgive the man and they began thinking, 'How dare this man forgive sins? Only God can do that.'

🗨️ **Say:** Jesus then asked a question to the teachers of the law. 'Which is easier: to say to the man, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Get up, take your mat and walk"?''

🗨️ **Say:** This might be a bit hard to understand, but I think Jesus was trying to get through to the teachers of the law and tell them that he was the Son of God and God has given him the power to forgive sins and heal people. These things could not be done by just a regular person, but only by God.

🗨️ **Say:** Then, before he was finished, Jesus said to the paralysed man, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.'

🗨️ **Say:** The Bible says that the man got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all! I wonder how the man reacted when he was suddenly told that he could get up and go home ...

🗨️ **Say:** The crowd was very amazed, and they praised God saying, 'We have never seen anything like this!'

Ask: How do you think the paralysed man would have felt, because for 38 years he had been unable to walk?

Watch a video of the story – Jesus heals the paralysed man (Luke 5:17-26). <https://youtu.be/8cmppSIQUX4>

Sing It

Here is a great action song. I wonder if the paralysed man felt like jumping up and down when Jesus had healed him?

'I'm gonna jump up and down (Be happy)' by Doug Horley
<https://youtu.be/WodvQf0Jo9s>

And here's a video of some suggestions for the actions for the song!

'I'm gonna jump up and down actions'
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdRneMPatco>

Action It

- **Say:** In the story, a paralysed man was being lowered through a roof of a house on a mat. In Bible times, people used the roof of the house for more than keeping out the rain. During the summer, families might sleep on the roof to take advantage of the cool night air.

Demonstrate how to make a model of a man on a mat using pipe cleaners, paper and string. Use these instructions to help you:

<https://www.123homeschool4me.com/four-friends-helped>

If making your own mat, write the Bible verse in the middle and colour around the edges so it looks like a colourful mat. If tying the string in the corners is tricky for some of the children, use sticky tape instead.

- **Say:** Jesus knows what we need the most. The paralysed man desperately wanted to be able to walk, but Jesus first forgave him for his sins and then he healed him. God can see things that others can't see, like how we are doing on the inside. God would rather help us fix problems with our sin than answer prayers that we think we need. God knows best!

Pray It

- **Say:** As we pray today, hold up your man on the mat and gently and slowly lower him down, so when we get to say 'Amen' at the end, your mat is on the floor.
- **Say:** Let us pray.

Dear Lord Jesus, we know the paralysed man in this story had a hard life. He wasn't like many of the people around him. But we know he was blessed with faithful friends.

When his friends heard you were in town, they did all they could to bring him to see you. He was laid at your feet, Lord, to be healed. Those friends believed in you, Jesus, and by your love and compassion you forgave the man's sins and healed him completely.

Lord, friendships are part of our everyday life. We crave a friend who'll listen, laugh, encourage, and play with us. We want friendships that are lasting, faithful and fun. Help us to build good relationships with friends, Lord; and when they need help, help us to do the right thing and bring them to your feet so they can see you and know you for themselves.

Amen

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.