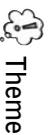


The man who helped



Theme

Caring for others



Bible verses

Luke 10:25–37



Artefacts

Some ointment and bandages

Picture of a rocky road

Introduction

Show the children a picture of the Holy Land when Jesus was alive. Talk about the way people travelled then. What would the roads have been like? How would they differ from our roads today? What does it mean to get mugged? Why do people mug other people?



Mugged!

Slowly... close your eyes. In our story we are going to travel a long way. We are going back to Judea at the time when Jesus lived there. Can you see the hills? They are quivering in the heat. It's very hot and very dusty. Just over there is the city of Jerusalem. In front of us, a road leads out of the city. There don't seem to be many people using the road.

Look! A man has just passed through the city gate. He's heading towards Jericho, 15 miles away, on his own. That's unusual. Most people travel in groups on this road. The reason is that single travellers often get mugged in the hills. I hope he's going to be all right.

The road winds round the hills. It won't be easy keeping an eye on him.

Look, he's stopped. Can you see why? That's right, he's having a drink. He keeps water in the goatskin bag slung over his shoulder.

Now our traveller has started walking again. You can follow the way he goes by the little cloud of dust. Do you think he feels lonely on that road? There's still nobody else about. Wait a moment. Did you see a movement behind those rocks?

Yes. Three men. They seem to be hiding. Our traveller hasn't seen them. He's still walking along the road towards them.

Did you see that? One of the men has jumped out in front

of the traveller. He seems to be talking to him. Oh no! The other two have crept out from behind the rocks. They're creeping up behind him. They have sticks in their hands. It's no good shouting—he won't hear us.

They've knocked him to the ground. Now what are they doing? They are stealing everything he has—his goatskin water bag, most of his clothes and his money. Surely they can't just leave him there? Yes, they can. The three muggers have run off into the hills.

Oh dear. Things don't look very good for our traveller. He's just lying there in the dust. The sun is beating down and he has no water. It all looks hopeless.

Wait a moment. Can you see? There's someone coming up the road. It's a priest on his way to Jerusalem. He'll stop and help...

I don't believe it. The priest had one look and crossed over to the other side of the road.

Another hour has passed. The traveller has hardly moved. Do you think he's given up any hope of help? Would you?

There's a small dust cloud down the road. It must be someone else. Perhaps the muggers are returning. No, it's another traveller. He'll stop and help...

I don't believe it. He's had one look and crossed over to the other side of the road.

That's it. There seems to be no hope at all. Our traveller is just lying there. He seems to be asleep. I think he's given up.

But wait a moment. Can you see? Coming round a bend in the road is a man on a donkey. Do you think he will go right by like the others? No. He's stopped. He's got off the donkey. He looks at the traveller. Now he's sat him up and

is giving him a drink. He's seen the cuts and bruises left by the muggers. Now he's putting on ointment and bandages.

The sun is beginning to sink. It's harder to see what's happening, but our traveller is now on the stranger's donkey. What a hero! How do you think our traveller feels now?

★★★

Follow-up

Can you act out a little play with your friends that tells the story of the traveller? Who will be the traveller, and the muggers? (Remember not to hit the traveller, just pretend!) Who will be the people on the road?

What things will you say in your play? How will you show what is happening? How will you show the feelings of the people in the story? You may like to show the rest of the class at the end.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, help us to recognize when people need us, and help us to know what to do. Don't let us be like the people who passed the traveller by. Instead, let us be like the man who stopped to help. Amen