

KS2 Unit 11, Lesson 1: Bilal

Context: In this lesson Pupils will be introduced to the story of Bilal. They will go on to see why his example is important to Muslims today.

Overview:

- Explain the role of the Muezzin in calling people to prayer.
- Tell the story of Bilal, the first Muezzin and discuss it's implications for Moslems today. What does it teach about racism?

Essential core: Key belief – Islam (Submission to the will of Allah). Pupils should know and understand: Know the story of Bilal and understand why this story is important to Muslims:

Bilal is a black African slave; refuses to obey his master to attack one of Muhammad's followers who claimed that all people are equal; while imprisoned, waiting to be punished, he became a Muslim; close to death he was sold to Abu Bakr one of Muhammad's closest companions; Bilal was freed; Bilal became the first Muezzin (gave the first call to prayer at the first mosque in Medina and then at the Ka'aba).

Meaning:

this story emphasises that people should be judged not by their position in society or race, but on their commitment to obey Allah's commands.

That Allah alone is worthy of worship.

Bilal exemplified his dedication to Allah, even risking his own life. He is a role model to Muslims.

Resources: persona doll, picture of a minaret, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwoM64-a4rg>

INTRODUCTION

This week Safiyya, the Muslim girl persona doll, has brought a picture of a minaret. This is the tower on a mosque from where a Muezzin calls people to prayer. What does it sound like?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5aMcuMUh1c>

STORY

Bilal was a black man who had been a slave. Tell the story of Bilal and then watch this short video about how he became the first Muezzin, giving the call to prayer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwoM64-a4rg>

REFLECT:

Muhammad said that all people were equal, like the teeth in a comb. Why did this make Umayya, Bilal's master, so angry? Bilal became a friend of Muhammad and the first Muezzin. Why does it matter so much to Moslems today that such an important person in Islam was a black man and had once been a slave? What does this story say about Moslems believe about racism?

Pupils might like to design a logo or poster to convey what the story says about racism, and how we should treat people, whoever they are.

PLENARY & FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT:

Why is the story of Bilal so important to Muslim people today? What does it teach about submission to the will of Allah and racism?

The story of Bilal, the first Muezzin.

Bilal was black African and a slave.

A man called Umayya owned Bilal, and he treated him badly.

When the merchant heard Muhammad teaching about one god, Allah, he was angry. He might lose money. But when he heard Muhammad say that all people were equal, like the teeth in a comb, he was furious. No slave was equal to him. The merchant decided to test Muhammad's teachings. He ordered Bilal to strike one of the Prophet's companions, firmly believing that a slave would not disobey his master. But Bilal had listened to Muhammad too, and he thought the Prophet was right. He believed that it was more important to obey Allah than his master, even if it cost him his life. He dropped the whip Umayya had given him, and refused to do as he was told.

Immediately the merchant had Bilal thrown in prison and hurt him badly. As he was hurt, Bilal cried out "One God, One God."

It happened that Abu Bakr, a great friend of the Prophet Muhammad was passing and heard Bilal. Moved by his voice, and his cry of "One God, One God," Abu Bakr haggled with Umayya until he was able to buy Bilal and set him free. As a free man, Bilal became a close and dear friend to both Abu Bakr and Muhammad. He helped to build the first mosque in Medina. The time came when the Muslim's were searching for a way to call the faithful to prayer, Bilal came into his own. The believers decided they did not want a flag, or a bell, or a rattle, or a drum, or a trumpet, but a beautiful human voice. Abu Bakr became excited. "Then there is only one voice we could use for our first call to prayer," he said, and explained how he had found Bilal and set him free. And so it was that Bilal became the first muezzin, the first to call people to prayer.