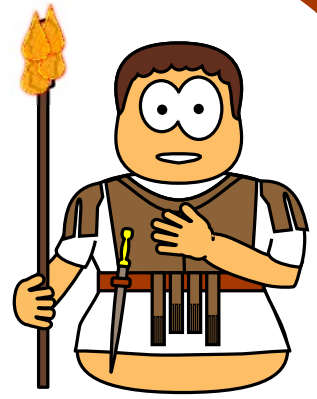


# Bible Heroes

Lamp  
Lighter

Teachers  
Story notes



Essential Teachers notes:

This is a story rather than a biblical retelling. It is recorded that Antioch had street-lighting in the early centuries so it's not a big jump to assume there would have been a lamp lighter. It's also assumed that people had started to scribble down the words of Jesus before the gospels were compiled. By attaching a face to this story it makes it easier for children to relate to the central teaching it contains. It also highlights how God uses ordinary people and professions.

Main Passage : Luke 11:33-36

Alternative Passages : Luke 8:16-18, Matthew 5:14-15, Mark 4:21-25

Albas lived in Antioch and he had a very special job, he was a lanternarius. Antioch was one of the first cities in the world to have street lights and Albas was the man who lit them. During the day he would fill each lamp with oil and once it began to get dark he would carry a flaming torch to light each one. Lighting the lamps meant that businesses could keep working after dark, that people could move about the city safely, and parties could be held with dancing and music in the evenings.

On his travels around the streets he would hear the latest news. Albas was nosy and a gossip. Sometimes he'd try to look into houses and try and see things he shouldn't so he could gossip about them. One day he heard that the preacher Paul was going to be teaching that evening in one of the bigger houses. People had started to call Paul's followers 'Christians' as they would go on and on about a man called Jesus who was 'Christ'. It didn't sound very exciting to Albas but being nosy he decided he'd go and see what everyone was talking about.

By the time Albas arrived there was already a crowd. Albas had seen many parties and crowds but he had never seen a crowd like this one. There were rich and poor, tradesmen and slaves, kids darted about by his feet and old women hugged soldiers like old friends. He could see some people with Jewish prayer scarves but many didn't have them. Albas recognised some faces too, respectable people and those who would not admit their work in polite company. Albas didn't know where to look next, it was an amazing mix of people.

Paul stood up to one side of the room and started to tell them about a man called Jesus. Jesus wasn't just a man he was God's son. Paul told them that Jesus had come from heaven and lived and died and come back to life again. Albas had heard this story already but the people here seemed to believe it was true. Then Paul told them about Jesus' teaching, he opened a scroll and read out:

"No one, lights a lamp then covers it with a basket or puts it under a bed. They sets it on a lamp stand, so everyone coming in can see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light"

Albas sat forward, he knew all about lamps. Sometimes on his rounds people would pay him to come light their lamps with his long stick, they were hung up high in the room or on a very tall stand just like Jesus had said. Albas also knew about secrets, he saw many things that were secret on his walks.

"Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness."

Albas leant forward even more. It was like Jesus had spoken the words just for him. Did Jesus know that he liked to look at things he shouldn't? Did Jesus know the dark feeling of knowing something you shouldn't?

"Make sure the light within you is not darkness. If your whole body is full of light, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you."

Paul put the scroll down and looked at the room. Albas had stood up without realising it. Paul looked directly at him and Albas found himself saying "I'm full of darkness, Jesus said I'm full of darkness, How do I fill my body with this light?"

Paul walked through the crowd to Albas and took his hand. It was like holding a torch, Paul had a light about him that Albas had never seen. Albas didn't understand but he knew that he wanted that light too. Albas joined the Christians and started to learn, and soon he was a different man, even people on the street noticed and asked him why he had changed. He got to spend his life bringing light to people not just with a torch and lamps but also with the messages of Jesus.

**Today's hero is the lamp lighter, because he shows us the gift of light.**