



Haratua 11 – Ruatara

**Mihimihi /
Introduction**
10 mins

Mihi
Sharing, catching up
Icebreaker ideas to get everyone into the mood

**Pānui /
Reading**
5min

John 1: 1-9

Hoani 1: 1-9

Activity
20mins

- Stepping Stones to Christ
For older tamariki, have a korero about the phrases on the stepping stones. What do they mean?

**Conclusion
Evaluation**
5mins

What did we learn? Positives, negatives, suggestions for next week?

Feedback from tamariki/whanau

Resources needed:

Bible	Poster printed
Stationery/ craft resources	A4 or A3 paper

More information on Ruatara can be found here:

- <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1r19/ruatara>
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/maori-european-contact-before-1840/ruatara>
- <https://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/ruataras-mission>



Readings:

John 1: 1-9

Today's reading comes from the book of John, chapter 1, beginning at verse 1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Hoani 1: 1-9

Ka timata te panui kei te pukapuka o Hoani, te 1 o ngā upoko, ki te whiti 1

I te tīmatanga te Kupu, i te Atua te Kupu, ko te Atua anō te Kupu. ²I te Atua anō tēnei Kupu i te tīmatanga. ³Nāna ngā mea katoa i hanga; kāhore hoki tētahi mea i kore te hanga e ia o ngā mea i hanga. ⁴I a ia te ora; ko te ora te mārama mō ngā tāngata. ⁵I roto i te pōuri te mārama e whiti ana; heoi, kīhai i mau i te pōuri.

⁶I tonoa mai he tangata e te Atua, ko Hoani tōna ingoa. ⁷I haere mai ia hei kaiwhakaatu, hei whakaatu mō te mārama, kia meinga ai e ia ngā tāngata katoa kia whakapono. ⁸Ehara ia i te mārama, engari, i haere mai hei kaiwhakaatu mō te mārama. ⁹Ko te mārama pono tērā, arā, ko te mārama e mārama ai ngā tāngata katoa e haere mai ana ki te ao.



Reflection notes:

This reading is often confusing. What is it talking about? What does it have to do with Ruatara?

Well, the first part, verses 1-5 reinforce that God is the supreme being. God is AMAZING. Everything exists because of God. God is the light, the life, the beginning and the end. Ko te Atua te arepa me te omeka.

The next verses, those of 6-9, talk about John. Because John was an amazing person. John came to proclaim and to testify to the light. He came to express his belief in God's existence, and prepare the way for Christ. He prepared the people of Israel for the journey that would come when Christ arrived and after he died. John was an incredibly important person in paving the way for Christianity to exist.

That's where Ruatara comes in. Ruatara was an incredibly important person in paving the way for Christianity to exist in Aotearoa. He brought the missionary Samuel Marsden to help spread the Gospel. Like John, Ruatara testified to the life-giving goodness of God. He knew that the light existed and he wanted everyone else to know. He used his resources, his mana, and his heart to prepare his people for a life-changing journey with Christ.

And this journey and story still exists for his people today. What a legend.



Korero about Ruatara

Ruatara was a significant figure in the introduction of Christianity to New Zealand, for it was through him that Marsden found an opening for the establishment of a mission.

Ruatara was a Nga Puhi chief from the Bay of Islands. Like other young Māori men at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ruatara served on a number of ships in South Pacific waters.

Ruatara spent the years 1805 to 1809 on various ships, sometimes being treated fairly and sometimes unfairly by the captains. In 1809, on his way back to Australia after a visit to Britain, Marsden discovered Ruatara on board in a pitiful state. Ruatara had made the journey to England to visit King George III, but had been badly treated and put on board the “Ann” to be taken back to Australia. Ruatara was depressed at the failure of his plans to see King George III and was vomiting blood from the beatings he had received. Marsden was horrified to discover him in this condition and saw to his needs. Ruatara recovered and served his passage back to Australia. Once there, he stayed with Marsden at Parramatta for most of 1809, learning a great deal about agriculture.

At the end of 1810 Ruatara wanted to return to his own people, and Marsden planned for him and several other young Māori men to work their passage on the “Frederick”. The captain of the “Frederick” deceived them all and abandoned them on Norfolk Island. Ruatara and the others eventually reached home, via Port Jackson once again, on the “Ann” in 1812.

Ruatara arrived back in the Bay of Islands to discover that he was now heir to Te Pahi’s mana. Following the killing of the crew of the [“Boyd”](#) in 1809, European sailors had mounted a punitive raid against Te Pahi for his supposed involvement in the incident. Te Pahi died as a result of the attack, and power devolved on Ruatara.

Ruatara, still in his mid-twenties, needed to prove himself as a chief. The weapons and tools helped, but he found it harder to persuade others of the advantages of the agriculture he now proceeded to put into practice. Ruatara went back to Port Jackson and learned more of the technological skills that he so much valued. When the “Active” sailed to New Zealand in late 1814, Ruatara led a party of ten Māori on board, along with a missionary party led by Samuel Marsden.

They arrived at the Bay of Islands on 22 December 1814. Ruatara made the necessary preparations for the first service on New Zealand soil, on Sunday, Christmas Day, 1814. Half an acre of land was fenced; in the centre there was a pulpit and reading desk. Seats were made from the bottoms of old canoes and were provided for the Europeans. At 10 o’clock, the whole village assembled. Marsden began the service and preached on the text: “Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy” (Luke 2:10).

In March 1815 Marsden returned to Port Jackson. Before Marsden departed, Ruatara shared his enthusiastic vision for the development of his plans. These included bringing large areas of land into cultivation, and establishing a town on a European pattern, with streets and provision for a church. Ruatara got no further with his plans. He was already seriously ill when Marsden left and died four days later. In April, Ruatara’s remains and those of his wife Rahu, were carried inland to Motutara, Ruatara’s tribal lands.

This excerpt has been adapted from the anglican.org.nz website and can be found [HERE](#)



Activity

Stepping Stones to Christ

Ruatara helped pave the way for Christianity to exist in Aotearoa. The journey with Christ often involves a number of steps. Try and help the tamaiti jump on the right stepping stones to get to Christ. Only follow the true comments about Christ.

