

EASTER BONUS SESSION 1

# JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

MATTHEW 21; MARK 11; LUKE 19; JOHN 12



**CHRIST CONNECTION:** The people welcomed Jesus as King, but Jesus knew the people would not welcome Him as their Savior. Trusting in Jesus means welcoming Him as Savior and Lord. If we know and love Him, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever.

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.

**KEY PASSAGE:** 2 Chronicles 7:14

**STORY POINT:** People welcomed Jesus as their King.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### LEADER Bible Study

All four Gospels offer a glimpse into the joy that overtook the crowds of Jerusalem as King Jesus made His way through the city gates. The events that would take place in the city just one week later would starkly contrast to the high-spirited festivities of Jesus' triumphal entry. In His sovereignty, Christ knew He would face crucifixion at the hands of His own people; yet He willingly approached the cross for our salvation.

What was the significance of the people's shouts for the King and His coming kingdom? What do we learn about Christ's heart for the lost?

Crowds poured into Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, and many of them participated in creating a grand entrance for Jesus. They waved palm branches, a symbol of pride for the Jews, and called out for their new King to usher in a new reign for God's people. They had heard reports of how He raised Lazarus from the dead and were eager to see His next miracle. Yet, they misunderstood the purpose of His entry into the holy city—it was not to overthrow their oppressors but to offer salvation to all who would turn to Him in faith. They sought a mighty conqueror in Jesus, not knowing that the Father would instead send a Suffering Servant to be sacrificed on their behalf. They wanted an earthly king to reign amid their difficult circumstances, not a Messiah who would be publicly humiliated on a cross. Despite what His people desired, God knew who His people needed and sent His Son to save them.

As Jesus approached the city, He wept for it—knowing the fate that would soon befall Him and the great price He would pay to establish peace between God and man. We later see His heart for the lost as He pleaded for the Father to forgive the people's sins. What God's people didn't know then is the story we get to proclaim now: Christ died for sinners! Lead boys and girls to see that Jesus is greater than our earthly rulers and worldly desires. He is the sovereign Savior and Lord who has already paid the price for our greatest need: salvation!



#### PREPARE

##### THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



#### WELCOME

##### 10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



#### LEARN

##### 25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



#### LOVE

##### 15–20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel



#### LIVE

##### 15–20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



## PREPARE

### PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, Allergy Alert, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, tape, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map, snacks, paper cups, napkins.



### WELCOME

#### Welcome

- ☐ "If My People Pray (2 Chronicles 7:14)" song

#### Activity Page

- ☐ "Match the Pictures" Activity Page, 1 per child

#### Wave streamers

- ☐ crepe paper streamers
- ☐ jumbo craft sticks

#### Transition

- ☐ countdown video (optional)



### LOVE

#### Snack and talk

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

#### Match happy and sad faces

- ☐ paper plates



### LIVE

#### Make praise rocks

- ☐ stones, 1 per child
- ☐ paint markers or stickers
- ☐ googly eyes

#### Untie animals

- ☐ plastic toy animals
- ☐ chenille stems

#### Toss a coat on the donkey

- ☐ "Donkey" printable, 1 copy
- ☐ jacket

#### Transition

- ☐ coloring page, 1 per child
- ☐ "If My People Pray (2 Chronicles 7:14)" song
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



### LEARN

#### Introduce the Bible story

- ☐ party hat

#### Learn about the Bible

- ☐ bookmark
- ☐ Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline

#### Tell the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video (optional)
- ☐ storytelling tips props (optional)

#### Practice the key passage

- ☐ Key Passage Marker
- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "If My People Pray (2 Chronicles 7:14)" song

#### Learn the Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster



## WELCOME Preschoolers

Post an Allergy Alert, if needed. Set out supplies to engage preschoolers as they arrive. Play music as you welcome preschoolers. Greet children by name at eye level. Follow your church's security procedures.

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete "Match the Pictures" on the Activity Page.

**SAY** "Each picture you matched to its shadow reminds me of part of the Bible story today. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, many **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. They waved palm branches and shouted, 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord,' but some people were angry and told Jesus to stop the people from cheering for Him. Jesus said the rocks would start praising Him if the people stopped."

### 2 SESSION STARTER

Use one or both of the following options to engage curiosity about today's Bible story.

#### TAP, CLAP AND SHOUT



Guide children to sit in a circle on the floor. Lead children to begin patting their legs very softly. Instruct children to pat louder when you raise your hands and softer when you lower your hands. Raise and lower your hands several times. Lead children to try the activity by saying the word "hosanna" as they pat their legs. If time allows, lead children to try the activity with clapping and stomping or invite each child to have a turn leading the group.

**SAY** "In today's Bible story, **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. They were very happy and shouted 'Hosanna' loudly, just like we did in our game, but the religious leaders were angry and told the people to be quiet."

#### WAVE STREAMERS

Help each child tape crepe paper strips to the end of a large craft stick, or prepare them ahead of time. Play upbeat, worship music. Lead children to celebrate Jesus by waving their streamers to the music.

**SAY** "It was fun celebrating Jesus with our streamers. In today's story, the people celebrated Jesus, too. They waved palm branches and shouted, 'Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

### 3 TRANSITION TO LEARN

Gain preschoolers' attention by showing the countdown video, turning the lights off and on, or clapping a simple rhythm for children to copy. Invite preschoolers to wave their arms like palm branches as they transition to Learn.

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Show the party hat. Ask each child to tell about a party or celebration they enjoyed.

**SAY** “I loved hearing about each of your celebrations. Celebrations can be so much fun! In our Bible story today, there was a huge celebration, but some religious leaders got angry and wanted the celebration to stop. Let’s listen to the story to hear what happened.”

### 2 LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE

Place a bookmark at Matthew 21 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

**SAY** “The Bible is God’s Word, and we can trust that God’s words are true. Today’s story is special because it is found in the Bible four times. Once in each of the four Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.”

Point to the Bible story picture on the Giant Timeline or Small Group timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

### 3 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling tips or show the video. Use the bold version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers.

#### JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

“Jesus and His disciples were walking to a big city called **Jerusalem**. On the way, **Jesus asked two of His disciples to go ahead into a village and find a donkey**. He told them, “When you see the donkey, untie it and bring it to Me. If someone asks why, just say, ‘Jesus needs it.’”

So, **the disciples went and found the donkey**, just like Jesus said they would. **When the owners asked why they were taking it, they said, “Jesus needs it.”** This was all happening because a long time ago, God had promised that a special King would come riding on a donkey.

**They brought the donkey to Jesus, and the disciples laid their coats on its back** to make it comfy for Jesus to sit on. **Then, lots of people came and put their clothes and palm branches on the road for Jesus** to travel on. **Everyone was happy and shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!”**

**But some people did not like all the cheering. They told Jesus to make everyone be quiet. Jesus said, “If they are quiet, even the rocks will cry out!”**

**As Jesus got closer to the city, He felt sad. Jesus cried. He knew that because the people did not understand who He really was, something bad would happen to the city. The religious leaders saw how everyone loved Jesus, and they were worried that they could not stop Him. They said, “Everyone is following Jesus!”**”



## LEARN

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

#### 4 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ The people welcomed Jesus as King, but Jesus knew the people would not welcome Him as their Savior. Trusting in Jesus means welcoming Him as Savior and Lord. If we know and love Him, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. ”

#### 5 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Jesus gave two of His disciples a special job. What was it? (find a donkey) What sound does a donkey make? [Lead children to bray like a donkey.] Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. Everyone was so excited to see Jesus! **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** They shouted and tossed coats and palm branches on the ground for Jesus to travel on. What did the people shout? (Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord) Let's say 'Hosanna' three times. Ready? 'Hosanna!, Hosanna! Hosanna!' As Jesus got closer to the city, He felt very sad because even though the people welcomed Him as their King, they did not understand He is God's Son. ”

#### 6 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Before the session, write each word of the key passage on individual sheets of paper. Tape the words on the floor in a hopscotch pattern. Place the Key Passage Marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Invite preschoolers to take turns jumping on the words and saying the key passage.

**SAY** “ In our Bible story, the people welcomed Jesus as their King, but Jesus was sad because He knew the people didn't really understand who He was. Jesus wants people to welcome Him as their Savior and Lord. When we turn away from our sin and know and love Jesus, He will forgive us. ”

Sing the key passage song, “If My People Pray (2 Chronicles 7:14)” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

##### Play out the story:

Select a child to be Jesus, two children to be the disciples, and a few children to be the religious leaders. Give the remaining children palm branches (real or green paper taped to a craft stick). Place a stuffed donkey or a copy of the “Donkey” printable on the floor to begin. Tell the story enthusiastically as you direct the children to play out what you describe.

**Wear a crown:** Place a crown in a large gift bag. Place the gift bag in front of you as you tell the Bible story. When you talk about the people shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord,” take the crown out of the bag and place it on your head.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

## 7 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

**SAY** “ Our big picture question is, **What is repentance?** The answer is, **Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.** Sin is disobeying God. Our key passage tells us that if we turn away from sin and pray, God will forgive us. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**



## LOVE God because of what we learned

### 1 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him.

**SAY** “God, thank You that if we repent and turn from our sin, You will forgive us. I pray that each of these children will welcome Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Amen.”

### 2 SNACK AND TALK

Post an Allergy Alert. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

**SAY** “What was your favorite part of today’s Bible story?”

**SAY** “What did you learn about God in today’s Bible story?”

**SAY** “Why did the people praise Jesus?”

**SAY** “What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.”

### 3 MATCH HAPPY AND SAD FACES

Prior to the session, draw a large happy face on a paper plate and cut it in half, making a zigzag pattern. Make three more happy faces and four sad faces, each time cutting them in half with a different type of cut. Place all the plates on the floor facedown in a grid pattern. Invite a child to turn over two plates and see if they match. If they match, they keep them; if not, they place them back on the floor facedown. As each child finds a match, invite them to share something that makes them feel happy or sad.

**SAY** “You found all the matches! Thank you for telling us about something that makes you happy or sad. Jesus always loves and cares for us, no matter what happens. In today’s Bible story, there were lots of emotions: the people were happy to see Jesus, the religious leaders felt angry, and Jesus felt sad because many of the people didn’t understand who He really was. Jesus is God’s Son. God sent Jesus to die for our sins and come back to life. If we know and love Jesus He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. How does that make you feel?”





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LIVE for God out of love

- 1 Choose the activities that best fit your group, space, available resources, and time constraints. Set up activities in one of these ways: as a group, all at the same time; in small groups that rotate through each activity; or set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

#### PASS THE PALM BRANCH



Draw a simple palm branch on a sheet of paper. Invite children to sit in a circle on the floor. Give one child the paper with the palm branch drawing, and give all the other children a blank sheet of paper. Lead children to crumple their paper into a ball. Show how to pass the paper balls around the circle. After about 15 seconds, say, “stop.” Instruct children to open their paper balls. The child with the palm branch will stand in the middle and lead the children to say, “Hosanna!” Invite that child to remain in the middle and call out “stop” for the next round, continue until each child has a turn.

**SAY** “ In today’s Bible story, **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. Did you know we can welcome Jesus as our Savior and Lord? If we know and love Jesus, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. ”

#### MAKE PRAISE ROCKS

Cover a table with a tablecloth and assist preschoolers with placing a smock over their clothing. Distribute a rock and a washable paint pen to each preschooler. Invite children to make a talking rock. Encourage children to give their rocks a mouth. Help preschoolers to attach googly eyes. Remind children that when we praise someone, we say good things about them. Suggest the children think up good things for their rocks to say about Jesus.

**SAY** “ Do you remember what Jesus said about the rocks in today’s Bible story? Jesus said if the people stopped shouting praise to Him, the rocks would start praising Him. What are some ways we can praise Jesus today? Jesus deserves all our praise and worship because when we trust in Him, He rescues us from our sin. Trusting in Jesus means welcoming Him as Savior and Lord. If we know and love Him, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. ”



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### UNTIE ANIMALS

Wrap small toy animals in chenille stems. Invite children to untie the animals. Children may enjoy re-wrapping animals for the next person or making other animals or shapes out of the chenille stems.

**SAY** “ In our Bible story, Jesus told His disciples to untie a donkey and bring it to Him. Jesus rode the donkey into town, and **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. Jesus knew the people would not welcome Him as their Savior. Trusting in Jesus means welcoming Him as Savior and Lord. If we know and love Him, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. ”

### TOSS A COAT ON A DONKEY

Tape a copy of the “Donkey” printable on the back of a chair. Place the chair beside you as you review the story. Put on a coat. Turn the chair so the donkey faces the children when you talk about the donkey. Take off your coat and toss it on the chair (donkey) as you talk about the disciples placing coats on the donkey. Invite children to take turns tossing the coat on the donkey.

**SAY** “ Have you ever seen a donkey? Would you want to ride a donkey? Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, and **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. What did the people shout? (Hosanna) God sent Jesus to save people from their sin. When we choose to trust in Jesus, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. ”

### 2 TRANSITION

Invite preschoolers to complete their coloring pages. Consider leading preschoolers to sing the key passage song or involving them in a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Give parents the completed Activity Page. Distribute the Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to review the Bible story and engage with the family discussion starters during the week.