

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.



IN ADVANCE TO TEACH 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



LEARN

10–15 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

20–25 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

IN ADVANCE TO TEACH THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep these items on hand for each session: Allergy Alert, Bibles, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map or globe, snack food, paper cups, and napkins.



LEARN

Welcome and worship with song

- ☐ "Help, Help, Help" song

Tell the Bible story

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

Review

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Respond through song and prayer

- ☐ "Be a Leader" song
- ☐ "I Know God Loves Me" song



LOVE

Make a welcome banner

- ☐ butcher paper
- ☐ various sizes of leaves
- ☐ unwrapped crayons

Play out the story

- ☐ paper squares
- ☐ people figures
- ☐ toy donkey

Trace with chenille stems

- ☐ chenille stems, 1 per child

Plan a celebration

- ☐ crepe paper streamers
- ☐ tape
- ☐ toy food and dishes



LIVE

Learn the Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Practice the Key Passage

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

Play quiet charades

- ☐ "Animals" printable



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 WELCOME AND WORSHIP WITH SONG

Greet preschoolers with a smile. As preschoolers arrive, sing a song such as “Help, Help, Help” or another upbeat worship song of your choice to engage and welcome preschoolers. Lead motions enthusiastically and encourage preschoolers to join you. Help the preschoolers think through what it means to worship God and why we often use music to help us do so. Take time to talk about any lyrics that might be challenging to understand.

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Hold up the Bible Story Picture Poster and ask preschoolers to tell you what they see.

SAY “Do the people in the Bible story picture look happy or sad? (happy) They were happy because Jesus came to their town! They heard about the amazing things Jesus had done like healing the sick. They welcomed Jesus by waving palm branches and shouting ‘Hosanna!’ Let’s learn more about this special day.”

Open your Bible to Matthew 21. Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bold version of the Bible story for young 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 to 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

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 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

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!”** ”

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.

3 REVIEW

Point to the Giant Timeline as you review today’s Bible story. Ask the following review questions.

1. What did you like about the Bible story? (Answers will vary.)
2. What were some things in the Bible story that made Jesus happy or sad? (Answers will vary.)
3. What did Jesus ask two of His disciples to find for Him? (a donkey)
4. Why do you think the religious leaders didn’t like it when people shouted good things about Jesus? (They may have been jealous; they did not believe Jesus was their King.)
5. What does “trusting in Jesus” mean? (welcoming Jesus as Savior and Lord)
6. **What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.**

SAY “PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING. The people were so excited and happy when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. They shouted that Jesus was their King and laid down coats and palm branches for Him to travel on. Jesus was sad because He knew the people didn’t understand He is God’s Son. Jesus wanted the people to welcome Him as their Savior and Lord. If you and I ask Jesus, He will forgive our sins and give us life with Him forever.”

4 RESPOND THROUGH SONG AND PRAYER

SAY “PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR 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.”

Sing “Be a Leader” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “I Know God Loves Me.” Collect an offering.

SAY “God, thank You for sending Jesus. Thank You that if we turn away from our sins and turn to Jesus, You will forgive our sins and give us a life with You forever. Amen.”





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

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.

1 ☐ MARCH AROUND THE ROOM



Call out “march” and lead children to march around the room. Call out “turn” and instruct children to march in the opposite direction. Call out “freeze” and instruct children to stop moving. As children continue to march, call out “march,” “turn,” and “freeze” randomly. Consider allowing preschoolers the opportunity to be the caller.

SAY “That was fun! All that turning reminds me of the word repent. When we repent, we turn away from sin and choose to obey Jesus. Sin is disobeying God’s rules. An example of sin is lying. We can repent by asking Jesus to forgive us for lying and to help us be truthful. **What is repentance?** Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.”

2 ☐ MAKE A WELCOME BANNER

Write Welcome in large letters in the center of a piece of butcher paper. Invite preschoolers to decorate a welcome banner for the room. Offer children unwrapped crayons and several different types of leaves. Show children how to place the leaf under the paper and then rub it with the crayon to create a leaf rubbing. (Note: This can be modified to an individual project by giving each child their own piece of paper.)

SAY “I like the colors and designs you added to our welcome banner. It was fun decorating with leaves. In our Bible story today, the **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. They waved palm branches to welcome Jesus. Palm branches have long, skinny leaves.”

3 ☐ PLAY OUT THE STORY

Set people figures, a toy donkey, and paper squares in the block area. Lead preschoolers to play out the story by using blocks to build a path and placing paper squares on the path to represent coats. Guide children to line up people figures along the path. Finally, set a people figure on the toy donkey to travel down the path.

SAY “In today’s Bible story, **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. Do you remember what they shouted? (Hosanna!) The people were so excited that Jesus had arrived! But there was a group of people who were not happy. The religious leaders told Jesus to make the people stop praising Him. Do you remember what Jesus said would start praising Him if the people stopped? (Rocks) Can you imagine a bunch of rocks shouting praises to Jesus? I am so thankful we can praise Jesus as our King and Savior.”



LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

4 □ TRACE WITH CHENILLE STEMS

Draw two large eyes and a nose on several pieces of paper. Offer the preschoolers chenille stems and suggest they form a smile on the face. Next, lead them to change the smile into a frown. Then, challenge them to make an angry face. Suggest they add angry eyebrows.

SAY “ You showed a lot of emotions with your chenille stems. There were a lot of emotions in our Bible story today. Do you remember who felt happy and excited? (the people) Who felt angry and jealous? (the religious leaders) And who felt sad? (Jesus) Jesus felt sad because the **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**, but most would not welcome Him as their Savior. ”

5 □ PLAN A CELEBRATION

Invite a few children to plan a pretend celebration. Encourage them to make a pretend meal. Offer crepe paper streamers and tape and suggest they decorate for the party. Guide them to invite their friends to the celebration. Suggest that they say, “Welcome to the party, [insert child’s name]!” each time a new friend comes to play.

SAY “ You planned a fun celebration. The people in our Bible story had a celebration, too. Do you remember who they welcomed to Jerusalem as a king? (Jesus) **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. You and I can welcome Jesus, too. We can welcome Him as our Savior and Lord. ”



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

SAY “ In the Bible story today, Jesus was sad because the **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**, but Jesus wanted them to repent and trust in Him. **What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.** When we trust Jesus and welcome Him as Savior and Lord, He will forgive our sin and give us life with Him forever. ”

2 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Before class, record a video of yourself and several other adults each saying the key passage. Make things more challenging by suggesting that the adults disguise their voices by speaking in different accents or tones. Invite the children to sit in a circle on the floor. 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. Play one of the videos with the screen covered and challenge children to guess who is saying the verse. Play the video again with the screen showing and clap for the children who guessed correctly. Repeat with the other videos. Lead the children to say the verse together.

SAY “ In our Bible story today, Jesus was sad because He wanted to forgive the people’s sins, but He knew most of them would never turn from their evil ways and put their trust in Him. ”

Sing the key passage song “If My People Pray (2 Chronicles 7:14)” together.

3 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have. Pray for them.

SAY “ God, help us celebrate Jesus by trusting in Him and repenting of our sins. Thank you for sending Jesus as our Savior and King. Amen. ”

☐ **PLAY QUIET CHARADES**

Print and cut apart the “Animal” printable. Tape the animals around the room so they are easy to see. Invite children to sit in a circle. Choose one child to stand in the middle. Explain that the child in the middle and the children in the circle must remain quiet during the game. Guide the child in the middle to look around the room at the animal pictures and choose one to play out. Instruct the children in the circle to go stand by the animal they think the person is playing out. Choose one of the children standing by the correct animal to be the child in the middle during the next round. For a less active option, lead the children in the circle to point to the animal rather than go stand by it.

SAY “ Was it hard to stay quiet during the game? Did you want to shout out the answers? In our Bible story, **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. But the religious leader wanted the people to be quiet. What did Jesus say would start praising Him if the people stopped? Rocks, that’s right! What is something you can praise Jesus for today? ”