

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH

ZECHARIAH



CHRIST CONNECTION: Zechariah talked about a special King who would come to gently lead the people. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How did God fix what sin broke? God sent Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: This is our God. We waited, and He saved us. Isaiah 25:9

STORY POINT: God's kingdom is forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Zechariah was a prophet during the same time as Ezra and Nehemiah. Zechariah’s words were an encouragement to the people of God as they rebuilt the temple.

Zechariah reminded people they were building a temple to not only be a place of worship, but a temple to serve as a reminder of God’s everlasting promises. Zechariah prophesied about the coming of the Messiah. He reminded people that God’s kingdom will last forever and that the coming Messiah will reign eternally.

More specifically, Zechariah prophesied that the Messiah would come to them humbly, riding on a donkey. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy on Palm Sunday when He entered Jerusalem to crowds carrying palm branches, declaring Him to be the one who comes in the name of the Lord. As Jesus entered the town that day, He came riding on a donkey. Jesus knew the prophecy from Zechariah would declare boldly and publicly that He is the Messiah.

Another prophecy in Zechariah 6:12-13 declares: “You are to tell him: This is what the Lord of Armies says: Here is a man whose name is Branch; he will branch out from his place and build the Lord’s temple. Yes, he will build the Lord’s temple; he will bear royal splendor and will sit on his throne and rule. There will also be a priest on his throne, and there will be peaceful counsel between the two of them.” In this prophecy, Zechariah reminded the people that the temple they were building was a foreshadowing of one who would come and bring the presence of God to us. Through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, He made the way to bring people into God’s presence forever. Jesus is now seated at the Father’s right hand, exalted to reign forever.

The book of Zechariah reminds us that Jesus is fulfillment of God’s plan to send a Messiah who would save people from sin. As you teach, remind kids that Jesus invites them to trust in Him to be saved, and that one day, He will return to establish His kingdom forever.



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

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.

WELCOME

Whisper messages

- Big Picture Question Poster



LEARN

Talk about dreams

- small pillow

Tell the Bible story

- "The Prophet Zechariah" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- Bible Story Picture Poster

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Play a "Where's My Crown?" game

- toy crown

Measure with rope

- yarn or rope cut into 12-inch pieces, 1 per child



LIVE

Toss a crown

- paper or plastic crown, 3
- empty two-liter bottles, 3
- masking tape
- paper plates (optional)

Missions activity

- "Jim and Jean Leeper Photos" printable
- toy dishes
- toy food

Snack and transition

- hand sanitizer (optional)
- "Cross Out Items" activity page, 1 per child
- Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker
- toy donkey

Decorate crowns

- silver and gold star stickers
- gray and yellow markers
- heavyweight paper, 1 per child

Find the hidden crown and donkey

- toy crown
- toy donkey



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, story point, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the room. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

WHISPER MESSAGES

Display the Big Picture Question Poster within sight of children. Arrange the preschoolers in a line and guide the first child to whisper a phrase in the next child's ear. Use a short phrase such as "Jesus is King," "**GOD'S KINGDOM IS FOREVER**," or "Jesus is God's Son." Encourage preschoolers to pass the phrase down the line and allow the last child in line to say it out loud. Repeat with other phrases as time allows.

SAY 🗨️ I love seeing you at church today! You did a great job whispering messages to one another. Today, we will learn about a prophet named Zechariah. A prophet is someone who passes on to people what God said, just like we passed along a message to one another. Zechariah taught about a special King who would come to gently lead the people and shared that **GOD'S KINGDOM IS FOREVER**. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King. Our big picture question and answer says, **How did God fix what sin broke? God sent Jesus.** 🗨️

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





LEARN the Bible Story

1 TALK ABOUT DREAMS



Show children a small pillow. Discuss with children that we often use pillows when we sleep. Remind children that when we sleep, we may have dreams. Ask children if they remember any dreams they have had. Share a funny dream that you remember.

SAY “ In our Bible story, we will learn about Zechariah and the visions God gave him as he slept one night. Zechariah’s special visions were from God. Zechariah was a prophet. Prophets were people God used to help His people. Zechariah taught that **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER.** ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Zechariah. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH

SAY “ God’s people were back home. They worked hard to rebuild the temple. God sent special people called prophets, like Haggai and Zechariah, to help them. God talked to these prophets by showing them visions.

Even when the temple was finished, the people did not have peace. One night, God gave Zechariah eight special visions. Each vision showed something about what God would do.

First, Zechariah saw a man on a red horse riding all over the world. Second, Zechariah saw four big horns. God said His people would win against their four enemies, and the enemies would be punished.

Third, Zechariah saw a man with a rope trying to measure things. Zechariah saw many other strange things too: Joshua the priest, a shiny lamp, a flying scroll, a woman in a basket, and four chariots. All these visions were special messages from God.

God told Zechariah, “Make crowns of gold and silver, and put them on Joshua’s head.” Joshua looked like a king, but he was not the special King God promised. God said the true King would come one day and make everything peaceful.

“Your King is coming,” God said. “He will be a good King, riding on a donkey.” ”

Christ Connection: Zechariah talked about a special King who would come to gently lead the people. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Create a scroll by rolling up a piece of paper. Encourage children to sit in a circle. Place the Bible Story Picture Poster in the center of the circle. Pass the scroll around the circle while music plays. Stop the music and ask a child what he remembers from today’s Bible story. Use the Bible Story Picture Poster to encourage sharing. Repeat play as time allows.

SAY “ Zechariah saw many interesting things in his visions. He saw Joshua the priest, a shiny lamp, a flying scroll, a woman in a basket, a red horse, and more! Zechariah learned **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER**. Zechariah talked about a special King who would come to gently lead the people. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King. ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”:

This is our God.
This is our God.
We waited and He saved us.
This is our God.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Isaiah 25:9. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Learn the key passage phrase. Say the key passage phrase together as you pretend to sleep.

SAY “ God often spoke to the prophets with visions. Zechariah was one of the prophets who God spoke to this way. Zechariah learned that **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER** He accepted God’s promise that one day Jesus would come and be our kind King. Zechariah understood that the kind King, Jesus, would save us. ”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for His plan to rescue us from our sin by sending Jesus.

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





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 CREATE WITH PLAY DOUGH



Give each child a ball of play dough. Encourage children to make an item they remember from Zechariah's visions.

SAY “ Zechariah knew that **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER**. The visions God gave to Zechariah showed him that God would be sending another king to the people, but this king would be different from all others. God told Zechariah, ‘He will be a good king, riding on a donkey.’ God was talking about Jesus. ”

2 PLAY A “WHERE’S MY CROWN?” GAME

Encourage children sit in a straight line facing the back of a chair. Choose one child to be the “king” and sit in the chair with eyes closed. Place a toy crown behind the chair. Choose one child to retrieve the crown and return to her spot, placing the crown out of view behind her back. Give the “king” three guesses to find who has his crown. Choose a new king and repeat play.

SAY “ God told Zechariah to make crowns of gold and silver and put them on Joshua the priest’s head. Joshua looked like a king, but he was not the special king God promised to the people. God said the true king would come one day and make everything peaceful. Zechariah talked about a special King who would come to gently lead the people. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King. **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER**. ”

3 MEASURE WITH ROPE

Prior to the session, cut 12-inch lengths of yarn or rope for each child. Encourage preschoolers to measure classroom items such as blocks, books, and furniture with the yarn or rope. Point out when certain items are longer than the rope.

SAY “ You measured blocks, books, and other items with a piece of rope. In Zechariah’s vision from God, he saw a man measuring things with rope. The man tried to measure the city of Jerusalem, but it was too big! What items did you find that were bigger than your rope? **[Allow responses.]** Zechariah gave a message of hope about a good King who was coming to bring peace to the people. This good King is Jesus. ”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 TOSS A CROWN

Use masking tape to make a start line on the floor. Set three empty two liter bottles approximately four feet away from the tape line. Challenge preschoolers, one at a time, to toss a plastic or paper crown on the bottles. (Note: If crowns are unavailable, cut the middle section out of paper plates to create paper rings and tell preschoolers they are “crowns.”)

SAY “ You were really good at tossing the crowns on the bottles. In today’s Bible story, God gave Zechariah eight visions to encourage God’s people and give them hope. Zechariah talked about a special King who would come to gently lead the people. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King. We learned that **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER.** ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Print and display the “Jim and Jean Leeper Photos” printable. Lead preschoolers in using play dishes and food to take turns playing out being hosts and guests in someone’s home. After the activity, pray, thanking God for missionaries like the Leepers who helped change people’s lives through simple acts like making them feel special in their homes.

SAY “ Jean had a gift of showing kindness to people. People were welcome to come to Jim and Jean’s home if they needed a meal or a place to stay. She and Jim were like a family for soldiers and young married couples living far away from their families. This gave Jim and Jean time to build friendships with the people. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ Zechariah talked about a special King who would come to gently lead the people. This promise came true with Jesus, who came to save us and be our kind King. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 MAKE A LIST

Using paper and a pen, talk with children about what people dream about and make a list on the paper. Read the list to the children when they are finished naming things. Remind them to listen for the things in Zechariah's visions and see if any of the things on their list are the same as in Zechariah's visions. Tell the story.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Zechariah. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH

- God's people were back home and rebuilt the temple. Prophets like Zechariah helped them by sharing messages from God through visions.
- Even after finishing the temple, the people felt uneasy. God gave Zechariah eight visions about what He would do.
- In the visions, Zechariah saw a man on a red horse, four big horns, a man measuring the city, and other strange things. These visions were messages from God.
- God told Zechariah to crown Joshua the priest, but Joshua was not the special King. The true King would come one day and bring peace.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "The Farmer in the Dell":

This is our God.
This is our God.
We waited and He saved us.
This is our God.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Gather the children and form a circle. Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Isaiah 25:9. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase while passing a toy donkey.

5 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help us listen and obey even when it's hard.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PLAY AN “AWAKE OR ASLEEP” GAME



Lead the children to play “Awake or Asleep” as a freeze dance activity. Encourage the children to pretend to be asleep while you sing lullabies. When the lullabies stop, encourage the children to yawn and stretch as they “wake up.” Repeat play as time allows.

SAY “ Zechariah and other prophets had visions from God. Each vision was a special message for the prophet to share with the people. Zechariah had many visions from God, and some of them told about a special King who would come to fix what sin broke. The King in Zechariah’s vision was Jesus. **How did God fix what sin broke? God sent Jesus.** ”

7 DECORATE CROWNS

Draw a simple crown shape outline on heavyweight paper, one per child. Distribute crown papers, silver and gold star stickers, and yellow and gray markers to children. Encourage preschoolers to decorate their crowns with “silver” and “gold.”

SAY “ God told Zechariah in a vision to make gold and silver crowns to put on Joshua the priest’s head. Joshua looked like a king, but he was not the special king God promised. God said the true King would come one day and would be riding on a donkey. **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER.** ”

8 FIND THE HIDDEN CROWN AND DONKEY

Hide the toy donkey and the toy crown around the room. Encourage the children to search for the items and return them to you. Repeat and continue play as time allows.

SAY “ It was fun hiding and searching for the donkey and crown. God promised to send a good King, who would be riding on a donkey. God kept His promise when He sent Jesus. In the New Testament, we read that Jesus rode a donkey into the city of Jerusalem. The people praised Jesus and welcomed Him as their King. Jesus taught about God’s Kingdom and reminded the people **GOD’S KINGDOM IS FOREVER.** ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.