

EASTER BONUS SESSION 1

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

MATTHEW 21; MARK 11; LUKE 19; JOHN 12



KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus cried because He wanted the people in Jerusalem to know that He is the Messiah so that they would be saved. God wants all people to turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus, and accept the free gift of salvation and eternal life.

STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The triumphal entry presents two contrasting images: the people's celebration as Christ entered Jerusalem and Jesus' heartbroken lamentation as He wept over a city full of people He desired to save. Though God's people seemed overjoyed by the arrival of the Messiah, they did not understand what He would soon endure to pay the price for their sins.

Thousands had gathered in Jerusalem for Passover, one of the largest festivals of the Jewish calendar. Throughout this special week, Israelites came together for special rituals, feasts, and readings of Scripture. But this year was different; the people had received word of a miracle-performing prophet who could perhaps free them from the rule of the Romans. The Israelites expected the long-awaited Messiah to be a conquering king; they were not anticipating a Suffering Servant—the sacrificial Passover Lamb—who would lay down His life for their sins.

Yet, the all-knowing Christ was aware of the torment He would endure at the hands of the Pharisees and Roman authorities, and He received the crowds' praise even though He knew the masses would soon be calling for His execution. He knew the people of Jerusalem would betray Him, yet He wept for their lost state, nonetheless.

Jesus celebrated Scripture's promises of "Hosanna"—the salvation of God's people—and wept for those who would refuse to see God's love and receive His provision. Thankfully, Christ's once-and-for-all sacrifice wasn't just for His followers in the city of Jerusalem at that time; it is for everyone who places true faith in His finished work on the cross.

Lead boys and girls to see that Jesus created all people and cares deeply for them. Pray for their hearts to receive His truth and that they will celebrate the King who has secured eternal salvation for all who repent and believe in Him!



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out 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, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Spot the Differences" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ butcher paper

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ cardstock cut into bookmark shapes
- ☐ art supplies such as stickers
- ☐ hole punch
- ☐ ribbon or yarn



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ Bible times costume (optional)
- ☐ pictures of modern-day Jerusalem (optional)

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ Construction paper
- ☐ "Eternal Life (John 3:16)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ white cardstock
- ☐ washable green finger paint
- ☐ foam brush
- ☐ paper plates
- ☐ wooden craft sticks
- ☐ paper towels

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ small stones or rocks
- ☐ acrylic paint
- ☐ googly eyes
- ☐ paper plates
- ☐ paint brushes
- ☐ tablecloths
- ☐ paper towels
- ☐ water
- ☐ painting aprons (optional)

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “How would you welcome a special guest into your home? Would you decorate in a special way, cook a certain meal, wear special clothes, etc.?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Spot the Differences” on the activity page.

SAY “Today we will see how **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS INTO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**. Even though the people welcomed Him, many did not realize that He is the Messiah, the one who came to save them from their sins.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: WELCOME!

Roll out a large piece of butcher paper and write the word **WELCOME** in large letters across it. Lead the kids to decorate the banner using markers and crayons. As they draw, encourage them to talk about how they would welcome someone to a special event or party.

SAY “Today we are learning about when **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**. Just like we get excited when a special guest comes to spend time with us, the people were excited to have Jesus enter Jerusalem. I am looking forward to sharing this important story with you today.”

☐ OPTION 2: HOSANNA BOOKMARKS



Before this activity, write or type the word **HOSANNA** vertically down each bookmark. Write lightly so that kids can trace this word with their markers. Invite kids to sit around tables and distribute one bookmark to each kid. Place art supplies in the center of each table. Challenge kids to use a marker to trace the word **HOSANNA** on their bookmarks. Discuss how **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING** by shouting “Hosanna!” Then, encourage kids to use art supplies to decorate their bookmarks. Lastly, go around to each kid and punch a hole on the top of each bookmark. Allow kids to select a piece of ribbon or yarn to string through the top of their bookmarks.

SAY “**PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING** by shouting, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ I am looking forward to sharing more of this story with you today.”





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hi, kids! I am so glad you’re here. My name is [your name], and today I am excited to study a true story from the Bible together. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out and place it in your lap? (Distribute Bibles to kids who do not have one.) Guide kids to open their Bibles to the beginning of the New Testament. Remind kids that the stories of Jesus’ life are found in the New Testament.

Today we will learn about the last time Jesus would enter the city of Jerusalem during His ministry on earth. **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**, but He was not the kind of king they expected. Jesus wept for the people because they did not realize that He is God’s Son, the Messiah, who came to take away the sins of the world. I am looking forward to sharing more of this story with you today.”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “As we study the Bible together, we like to think about a big picture question and answer. This question helps us focus on an important truth from God’s Word. Do you remember our big picture question? [Allow responses.] Our question is: **Who is Jesus?** What is the answer to that question? [Allow responses.] **Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.**

Today we will see how **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS INTO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**. They had heard of Jesus and all the amazing miracles He did. They were excited to welcome Him into the city, but they did not know who Jesus really is—the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Jesus never sinned which means He is the perfect sacrifice who could pay the price our sin demands and save those who trust Him as Lord.”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Over the last several weeks we have learned about many important moments in Jesus’ earthly ministry from His first miracle, to cleaning out the temple, to His interactions with John the Baptist, Nicodemus, and the Samaritan woman at the well. All of Jesus’ earthly ministry had led up to this point, the beginning of the most important week. Today we will learn how **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS INTO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**.”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 21. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus’ Triumphal Entry.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

“Many people had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Jesus was coming to Jerusalem to celebrate too. He sent two of His disciples ahead of Him, saying, “Go into the village near Jerusalem, and you will find a young donkey tied there. Untie it and bring it to me.”

The disciples found the donkey, just as Jesus had said. They laid some of their clothes on the donkey, and Jesus sat down on them. Then He rode into Jerusalem. This fulfilled what was written by the prophet Zechariah many years ago:

“Tell the people of God,
See, your King is coming to you,
gentle, and mounted on a colt,
the foal of a donkey.”

When the crowd heard that Jesus was coming, they took palm branches and went out to meet Him. They spread the branches and some of their clothes on the ground ahead of Jesus. They kept praising God joyfully and shouting, over and over:

“Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Some of the Pharisees from the crowd called out to Jesus: “Teacher, tell your disciples to be quiet!” They thought the people shouldn’t be calling Jesus the King of Israel.

Jesus replied, “I tell you, if they were to keep silent the stones themselves would cry out!”

As Jesus approached the city, He wept for the city. He said, “If you only knew who I am and what is about to happen! But it is hidden from your eyes. You are unable to see that God is visiting you.”

Christ Connection: Jesus cried because He wanted the people in Jerusalem to know that He is the Messiah so that they would be saved. God wants all people to

STORYTELLING TIPS

Act It Out! Dress up and tell the story as a person who witnessed Jesus entering Jerusalem.

Modern-day Jerusalem: Display pictures of modern-day Jerusalem for kids to see and realize that Jerusalem is a real place and that you can still see many of the sites mentioned in the Bible.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

| turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus, and accept the free gift of salvation and eternal life. ” |

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Jerusalem was full of people who had come to celebrate the Passover. People had heard that Jesus was coming to the city to celebrate, so they went out to meet Him. Why did Jesus ride into Jerusalem on a donkey? [Allow responses.] The Bible tells us that Jesus rode into the city on a donkey to fulfill the prophecy written in the book of Zechariah. Jesus was the long-promised Messiah. All the promises the prophets had written throughout the Old Testament about the Messiah are fulfilled in Jesus.

What did Jesus do when He approached the city of Jerusalem? [Allow responses.] He cried because the people in that city did not understand that He was the promised Messiah, the Savior of the world. **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS INTO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**, but many of them missed the most important part. Jesus wanted the people to turn from their sin and trust Him as Savior.

There are many people today, even people you know, who say they like Jesus and think He was a good person and teacher. However, if they don't believe He is God, they are missing the most important truth: Jesus is the Savior of the world. A person can only be saved from their sins by trusting in Jesus as Savior.

Jesus cried because He wanted the people in Jerusalem to know that He is the Messiah so that they would be saved. God wants all people to turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus, and accept the free gift of salvation and eternal life. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ God wants all people to turn from their sin and trust in Jesus for salvation and eternal life. If you haven't trusted Jesus as Savior or have questions about this, I would love to share more with you. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 3:16 together.

SAY “ Let's continue memorizing our key passage together! It is so important to hide God's Word in our hearts so that we can always have it with us. ”

Before this activity, tape pieces of construction paper on the floor with one word of the key passage on each piece of paper. Invite kids to line up, one behind the other. Challenge the first kid in line to hop from one paper to the next while saying the key passage as he lands on each word. Then, direct the next kid in line to hop through the key passage. Continue until all kids have had a chance to complete the activity.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Lead kids to sing “Eternal Life (John 3:16).” You may also sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “Thank You, Lord, for sending Your Son, Jesus, to be the Savior of the world. Help us to share the good news that Jesus came to save anyone who accepts the free gift of salvation. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

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





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 19. Explain that the entire Bible is one big story, and it all points to Jesus. Throughout the Old Testament we see the problem of sin and our need for a Savior. We also see many references in the Old Testament pointing to the Messiah who would save the world from sin.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H5) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 19:37-40, or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses.

SAY “As Jesus approached the city of Jerusalem, His disciples and the crowd began singing and praising God for all the things they had seen as they traveled with Jesus. Some of the Pharisees did not like the disciples praising Jesus in this way and told Jesus to make the disciples stop. How did Jesus respond? [Allow responses.] Jesus told the Pharisees that if the disciples stopped praising Him, the rocks would cry out with praise.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “Why do we have to turn from our sin to trust Jesus as Savior?”

Following Jesus is the opposite of sinning. When we sin, we walk away from God and toward our own sinful desires. To trust Jesus as Savior, we must turn from our sins and walk in the opposite direction, toward Jesus, following His will and plan for our lives.

SAY “What does the word hosanna mean?”

The word hosanna means “save us.” The people of Jerusalem were shouting for Jesus to save them. The people thought Jesus had come as king to save them from the Roman government, but really, He had come to do something much better. He had come to save people from their sins.

SAY “How should we respond to the fact that many people do not know Jesus as their Savior?”

Jesus cried because the people of Jerusalem did not know He is the Messiah, their Savior. We should have this same kind of compassion and love for people. We should be concerned that people do not know about Jesus and share the good news of Jesus with them.

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: PALM BRANCH PARADE

Give each adult volunteer a plate with green paint on it and a foam brush. Invite kids to come up one by one to an adult volunteer. Direct kids to stand still as the adult volunteer paints green paint onto their hand and helps them stamp their handprint onto a piece of cardstock. Then, distribute a wooden craft stick to each kid. Place scissors and tape in the center of each table. Direct kids to write their names on their craft sticks using a pencil. Once their handprints are dry, challenge kids to carefully cut around their handprint using scissors and tape the handprint cutout to the end of the craft stick, creating a “palm branch.” Then, have a “palm branch parade” around the church and invite kids to wave their palm branches as they walk.

SAY “ Today we heard about how **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING**. They placed articles of clothing and palm branches on the ground to celebrate Jesus. Jesus came to save us from our sin and give us eternal life with God. ”

☐ OPTION 2: ... OR THE ROCKS WILL CRY OUT

Before this activity, cover several tables with disposable tablecloths. Invite kids to sit around tables and distribute a rock, a paint brush, a paper plate, and an apron to each kid. Go around to each kid and squirt a paint color of their choosing onto their plates. Challenge kids to use their paint brushes to paint their rocks. Remind them not to use too much paint so the paint will dry quickly. As time allows, invite kids to use a second color to paint stripes, patterns, etc. on their rocks. Once the paint has dried, invite kids to glue googly eyes to their rocks.

SAY “ Jesus told the Pharisees that if the disciples stopped praising Him, the rocks would cry out in worship. I hope you will take your rock home and remember that Jesus deserves all our worship and praise. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.