

EASTER BONUS SESSION 1

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

MATTHEW 21; MARK 11; LUKE 19; JOHN 12



CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus wanted the people to believe that He is the King and Savior of the world. God wants all people to turn away from their sin and trust in Jesus. Jesus forgives our sins and gives us life with God forever.

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

KEY PASSAGE: God loved the world and gave his one and only Son to all who believe in him. John 3:16

STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus 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 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 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 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-tip scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Guess the object

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ large paper bag
- ☐ toy donkey



LEARN

Wave a palm branch

- ☐ palm branch

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ palm branch

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Create a path

- ☐ large pieces of fabric in a variety of colors and patterns
- ☐ people figures (optional)

Wave scarves and dance

- ☐ scarves
- ☐ worship music



LIVE

Make palm branches

- ☐ large green construction paper, 1 per child
- ☐ craft sticks, 1 per child
- ☐ pencil

Snack and transition

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



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Play with animal figures

- ☐ toy animal figures, including a donkey
- ☐ felt or fabric pieces

Drive vehicles on roads

- ☐ vehicles
- ☐ painter's tape



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers opportunities to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, the 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 classroom. 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.

GUESS THE OBJECT

Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Tape the Bible Story Picture Poster to the outside of a large paper bag. Place a small, toy donkey in the bag. Greet kids as they come to the classroom and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Encourage children to feel what is inside the bag and guess what it is. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you talk about what is inside.

SAY “Welcome to church today! I am so happy to see you. There is something in this bag that reminds me of our story. Feel what is inside. Can you guess what it is? It is a donkey. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Our big picture question asks, **Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of God who came to earth to save us.** A big crowd of people came and put their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus and the donkey to walk over. **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.**”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 WAVE A PALM BRANCH

Post an Allergy Alert. As kids join you in the group-time area, pass a palm branch around and encourage children to wave the palm branch in the air and lower it to the ground as they say, “Hosanna!”, which means “Save us!”

SAY “ Jesus rode a donkey into the city of Jerusalem. A big crowd of people came and placed their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus to walk over. They shouted ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna to the highest heaven!’ ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 12. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

SAY “ Jesus and His friends were walking to the city of Jerusalem. Lots of people were meeting there to celebrate the Passover. Jesus told two of His friends to go to a village ahead and find a young donkey. He said, “When you see the donkey, bring it to me. If someone asks why, just say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” This happened because a long time ago, a prophet wrote that a special King would ride on a donkey. Jesus was making those words come true!

The friends found the donkey just as Jesus said and untied it. They brought the donkey and its colt to Jesus. They put some of their clothes on its back, and Jesus sat on them.

A big crowd of people came and put their coats on the road. Other people cut palm branches and put those on the road too. People walked in front of Jesus and behind Him. They all shouted: ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna to the highest heaven!’

But some people didn’t like the cheering. They told Jesus to make everyone be quiet. Jesus said, “If they’re quiet, even the rocks will talk!”

As Jesus got closer to the city, He felt sad. Jesus cried. He knew the people didn’t understand who He really was. The religious leaders saw everyone loving Jesus, and they were worried they couldn’t stop it.

Christ Connection: Jesus wanted the people to believe that He is the King and Savior of the world. God wants all people to turn away from their sin and trust in Jesus. Jesus forgives our sins and gives us life with God forever.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Encourage children to pass the palm branch around the circle as they answer a question about the story. Questions can include, What animal did Jesus ride on? (donkey) What did the people place on the road for Jesus to walk over? (coats and palm branches) What did the people shout? (Hosanna!) Use the Bible Story Picture Poster for clues to answer the questions. Assist children as needed.

SAY “**PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. The people placed their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus to walk over. They shouted ‘Hosanna!’ Jesus wanted people to believe that He is the King and Savior of the world. God wants all people to turn away from their sin and trust in Jesus. Jesus forgives our sins and gives us life with God forever.”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow”:

God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son.
To everyone who believes.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at John 3:16. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Invite kids to hug themselves as they say the key passage phrase with you several times.

SAY “Hugging makes me think of love. God loved the world so much. God gave His one and only Son to everyone who believes in Him. Jesus is God’s Son.”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for sending Jesus as King to rule over everything, including you and me.

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





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 MOVE AROUND THE ROOM



Encourage kids to help you think of different ways you can move from place to place. Ideas can include walking, hopping, swimming, or tip-toeing. Write each idea on a strip of paper. Invite a preschooler to choose a strip of paper and lead the group in moving around the room as the paper instructs.

SAY “We thought of several ways to get from one place to another. Jesus and His friends were walking to the city of Jerusalem. Jesus told two of His friends to go to a village and find a donkey. Jesus then rode the donkey into Jerusalem. A big crowd of people came and put their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus and the donkey to walk across. The people shouted, ‘Hosanna to the highest heaven!’ **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.**”

2 CREATE A PATH

Invite children to lay pieces of fabric, end to end, around the classroom to make a path. Once the path is completed, encourage boys and girls to follow the path themselves or lead people figures across the path. Suggest that children create a different path once everyone has had a chance to walk across it.

SAY “You made an interesting path with the fabric. This fabric reminds me of the coats that people wore over their clothes long ago. As Jesus traveled to Jerusalem, a lot of people walked behind Him and in front of Him. The people laid their coats on the road. As Jesus walked across the path they made for Him, the people shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.**”

3 WAVE SCARVES AND DANCE

Invite children to dance and wave scarves as you play worship music. If music is not available, sing songs the children know such as “Jesus Loves Me” or the key passage phrase song for this unit. Encourage kids to wave their scarves in the air and lower them down to the ground several times.

SAY “You waved your scarves in the air and laid them down as we praised Jesus. This reminds me of the people laying their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus to walk across. They praised Him by saying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ The religious leaders wanted Jesus to make them stop, but Jesus said if the people were quiet, even the rocks would talk. Jesus wanted the people to believe that He is the King and Savior of the world. God wants all people to turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus, and receive life with God forever.”

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 MAKE PALM BRANCHES

Before the session, prepare folded pieces of large green construction paper by drawing the shape of a palm branch on them, one for each child. Leave the paper folded in half and cut out the shape of the palm branch. Demonstrate for children how to use blunt-tip scissors to make cuts almost to the folded end. You may want to use a pencil to draw a stopping line so that children do not cut completely through. Unfold the palm branch and tape a craft stick to the end. Write the key passage phrase on the palm branch.

SAY “As Jesus was coming into Jerusalem, the people laid palm branches on the ground for Jesus to walk over. They shouted, ‘Hosanna!’ Our key passage phrase reminds us that God loved the world and gave his one and only Son, Jesus, to everyone who believes in him.”

2 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 “Jesus wanted the people to believe that He is the King and Savior of the world. God wants all people to turn away from their sin and trust in Jesus. Jesus forgives our sins and gives us life with God forever.”

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 enjoyed or 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.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 SHOUT HOSANNA!

Invite kids to shout “Hosanna!” as they come to the group-time area. Tell kids that a big crowd of people shouted “Hosanna! Hosanna!” as Jesus came into town on a donkey.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

- Jesus and His friends were walking to Jerusalem. Jesus asked two of His friends to go ahead and find a donkey. The friends found the donkey, and Jesus sat on it.
- This happened because a long time ago, a prophet wrote that a special King would ride on a donkey. Jesus made these words come true!
- A big crowd of people came and put their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus. They shouted, “Hosanna! Hosanna!”
- Some people didn’t like the cheering. They told Jesus to make everyone be quiet. Jesus said, “If they’re quiet, even the rocks will talk!”

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow”:

God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son.
To everyone who believes.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at John 3:16. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Tell preschoolers that Jesus is God’s Son and that the people welcomed Jesus as their King. Remind them that the people shouted “Hosanna!” Say the key passage phrase together several times in an excited voice with cheers.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking and praising God for all He has done in your life.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PLAY AN ANIMAL-SOUNDS GAME



Invite kids to play an animal-sounds game with you. Make animal sounds and encourage preschoolers to guess what animal makes that sound. For an added challenge, make three animal sounds in a row before allowing preschoolers to guess. See if they can correctly identify each of the sounds in the correct order. Invite preschoolers to take turns leading the game. Make the sound of a donkey in at least one round of the game.

SAY “ You did a great job guessing the sound of each animal in our game. I heard the sound of an animal mentioned in our Bible story today. Do you know what animal it was? A donkey. Jesus and His friends were walking to Jerusalem. Jesus asked two of His friends to go ahead and find a donkey. The friends found the donkey, and Jesus sat on it. This happened because a long time ago, a prophet wrote that a special King would ride on a donkey. Jesus made these words come true! Jesus wanted the people to believe that He is the King and Savior of the world. God wants all people to turn away from their sin to trust in Jesus and receive life with God forever. ”

7 PLAY WITH ANIMAL FIGURES

Cut felt or fabric into small pieces. Place the fabric pieces and animal figures, including a donkey, out for preschoolers to explore. As kids play with the animals and discover the donkey, encourage them to lay a piece of fabric over the donkey and make a path with the remaining pieces of fabric.

SAY “ Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead to find a donkey and her colt when they were traveling to Jerusalem. The disciples did what Jesus said. They put some of their clothes on its back, and Jesus sat on them. As Jesus got closer to Jerusalem, a lot of people walked with Him and laid their coats on the road. They shouted, ‘Hosanna!’ **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** ”

8 DRIVE VEHICLES ON ROADS

Make a path with painter’s tape throughout the classroom. Weave the path around tables, chairs, and other furniture. Place several types of vehicles at the start of the path. Invite kids to drive the vehicles on the path around the room.

SAY “ We used many types of vehicles to get from place to place today. What vehicle did you come to church in today? People long ago did not have vehicles like cars or trucks. Many people walked from place to place. Jesus and His friends walked to Jerusalem. Jesus told two of His friends to go to a village ahead and find a young donkey. They brought the donkey to Jesus and put some of their clothes on its back. Jesus sat on the donkey and rode it into Jerusalem, where the people were shouting, ‘Hosanna!’ **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** ”

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