

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44;
John 12:12-19

MAIN POINT: People welcomed Jesus as their King.

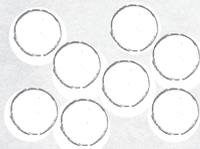
KEY PASSAGE: Romans 10:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.

SMALL GROUP OPENING

(15–20 MINUTES)

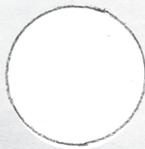
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LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY

(10–15 MINUTES)

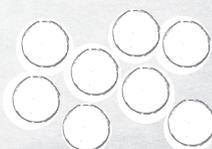
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SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

(20–25 MINUTES)

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Leader BIBLE STUDY

The Sunday before Easter is Palm Sunday—the day Jesus entered Jerusalem as the King of kings the week of Passover. Many of God's people traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. Jesus and His disciples traveled to Jerusalem as well. Near Bethphage (BETH fayj) and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead into a village.

Jesus told them, “You will find a young donkey tied there. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Jesus would fulfill Zechariah's prophecy: “Look, your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey” (Zech. 9:9).

Jesus made a spectacular entrance into the city. He rode a donkey, and people laid branches and their robes on the ground in front of Him. The people welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem believed He was the promised Messiah, but they expected Him to overthrow Roman oppression and set up an earthly throne. Jesus sent a different message.

The next day, Jesus entered the temple and turned over the tables of the money changers and those selling doves. Jesus referred to Isaiah 56:7, declaring that His kingship would not just be over the Jews but over all people. While Jesus was in the temple, He healed the blind and the lame. Jesus' actions declared, "I am not just your King; I am also your God" (Isa. 35:4-6).

Finally, the priests and the scribes heard the children in the temple worshiping Jesus as their King. "Do You hear what these children are saying?" they asked. Jesus replied, quoting Psalm 8:2: "Have you never read: You have prepared praise from the mouths of children and nursing infants?" Jesus gladly received their praise because He was worthy of their praise.

As you prepare for and celebrate Easter, help preschoolers connect the dots between God's promises of a Messiah and Jesus' coming. Help them understand why Jesus came: to save the world from sin!



MINISTRY GRID
training made simple

Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

*Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44;
John 12:12-19*

• **Fetch the donkeys:**

Guide small group leaders to invite the last two children who found the donkeys to bring them to large group. Call on two children to bring them to you when the friends bring the donkeys to Jesus.

• **Wave palm branches and coats:**

Bring palm branches and coats to lay out at the appropriate part of the Bible story. Consider providing one for each preschooler to lay down as you tell the story.

• **Play out the crowd:**

When you read about palm branches, invite children to raise their hands in the air. Invite preschoolers to shout hosanna too. When you read that Jesus healed the people in the temple, invite children to praise Jesus.

It was the time of year that the Israelites celebrated Passover. Many Israelites had traveled to Jerusalem to remember what God had done when He rescued His people from slavery in Egypt.

Jesus and His friends also traveled to Jerusalem. He sent two of them ahead to a village. Jesus said, “Go into the village ahead of you. There you will find a donkey and her colt tied up. Untie them and bring them to Me. If anyone says anything to you, you should say that the Lord needs them.”

The friends did what Jesus said. They put their robes on the donkey and the colt, and Jesus sat on them. As Jesus came to Jerusalem, a large crowd gathered. The crowd laid their robes on the road. They cut palm branches from trees and laid those on the road, too. The crowds walked ahead of Jesus, and those who followed Him shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One—the King of Israel! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” The word *hosanna* means “Save now!”

The religious teachers didn't like it. They asked Jesus to tell His friends to be quiet. “If they didn't praise Me,” Jesus said, “the rocks would cry out!”

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, people asked, “Who is this?” The crowds replied, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee!” They were only half right. Jesus wasn't just a prophet of God—He was God's Son!

Jesus went to the temple and drove out the money

changers there. While Jesus was at the temple complex, people who could not see and people who could not walk came to Him. Jesus healed them.

The priests and the scribes at the temple heard children shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” The priests and scribes asked Jesus, “Do you hear what these children are saying?” The children were saying, “The king is here! The king is here!”

Jesus said, “Yes. Even the children will praise Me.” Then Jesus left and went to spend the night in the town of Bethany.

Christ Connection: The people were happy to see Jesus. They knew He was their King. Jesus came riding on a donkey, just as the prophet Zechariah said He would. (Zechariah 9:9) One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything. (Revelation 19:11)



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
MORE!**

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover that people welcomed Jesus as King. Jesus is the Messiah, God's chosen King (Luke 19:38) who would die to rescue us from sin. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44;
John 12:12-19

MAIN POINT: People welcomed Jesus as their King.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 10:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.

Welcome time

- "Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Palm Branch Dot-to-Dot" activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Lead preschoolers to complete the dot-to-dot to reveal a palm branch.

SAY • Today we celebrate Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter. We call it Palm Sunday to remember how the people cut palm branches from trees and laid them on the road in front of Jesus as He went into Jerusalem. The people were happy to see Jesus.

Build a road



- blocks
- toy animals (optional)
- people figures (optional)

Invite preschoolers to use blocks to build a road through the classroom. Encourage children to use toys or other existing items in the classroom to set up scenes along the road. Consider providing toy animals and people figures to travel on the road.

SAY • In today’s Bible story, Jesus and His friends traveled to Jerusalem. Do you think they may have taken a road like this one to get to Jerusalem? Many of God’s people traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. At Passover, God’s people remembered how God had rescued His people from slavery in Egypt. Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem to rescue God’s people from sin once and for all.

Find the donkeys

Print a copy of the “Donkey and Colt” printable. Choose two children to be partners. Direct the partners to close their eyes while you hide the image somewhere in the room. The partners must stay together and work as a team to find the donkey image. Other children may give clues by saying “hot” as the pair approaches the donkeys or “cold” as they move away. After they have found the donkeys, invite the other children to close their eyes as the partners hide the donkeys again. Choose a new pair of children to look for the donkeys. Play as time allows.

- “Donkey and Colt” printable
- toy donkeys (optional)

SAY • Today in our Bible story, Jesus and His friends were going to Jerusalem. Before they entered the city, Jesus sent two friends ahead of Him to find a donkey and her colt. Listen to our Bible story to find out why Jesus wanted the donkeys.

Transition to Bible study

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite preschoolers to pretend to ride donkeys as they move to Bible study.

- countdown video (optional)

Large Group LEADER

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Introduce the Bible story

Invite preschoolers to tell you about a family member who lives far away. Tell about a member of your own family who lives in another town, state, or country.

SAY • What if that person came to see you today? How would you show you are happy to see them? In today's Bible story, Jesus went into Jerusalem. Listen how the people showed they were happy to see Him.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Place a bookmark in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Today's Bible story is found in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. All four Gospels! The word *gospel* means good news. These books in the Bible tell us the good news about when Jesus came to earth to rescue us.

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling helps. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

SAY • Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, just as the

- bookmark
- Bible
- "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

prophet Zechariah said He would. The people were so happy to see Him. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

Point to the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. What did Jesus ride when He entered Jerusalem? (*a donkey*)
2. What did the people do for Jesus when He entered the city? (**People welcomed Jesus as their King.**)
3. Who was not happy to see Jesus? (*religious teachers*)
4. What did Jesus do for the people at the temple who were blind and unable to walk? (*He healed them.*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • The people cried out “hosanna,” which means “save now,” when they saw Jesus. Only Jesus, the Son of God, can save us from our sin. ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from our sin.***

• Big Picture Question Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Romans 10:9. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, “If You Confess.”

SAY • *Confess* means to admit or say. Our key passage tells us that all we have to do to be saved is admit in our hearts that Jesus is Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead. Jesus did all the work to save us when He died on the cross and rose again.

• Key Passage Poster
• “If You Confess” song

Transition to small groups

Small Group ACTIVITIES

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Sing “Ho-ho-ho-hosanna”

Lead preschoolers in singing the song, “Ho-Ho-Ho-Hosanna.”

“Ho, ho, ho, Hosanna!

Ha, ha, Hallelujah!

He, He, He, He saved me!

I’ve got the joy of the Lord!”

If you are unfamiliar with the tune, look it up online before the session. Once preschoolers are able to sing the song easily, try singing the song very fast and very slow. You may also sing the song in different voices such as soft, loud, and so forth.

SAY • The people welcomed Jesus as their King. They shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” They knew Jesus was the forever King that God promised to send through King David’s family. The word *hosanna* means “Save now!” *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*

Examine palm leaves

Gather an assortment of palm leaves. Provide magnifying glasses for preschoolers to examine the palm leaves. Talk

- palm leaves
- magnifying glasses

about the differences and similarities in the shapes and textures of the different leaves.

SAY • As Jesus came to Jerusalem, **people welcomed Jesus as their King**. People cut palm branches from trees and laid them on the road in front of Jesus. Jesus came riding on a donkey, just as the prophet Zechariah said He would. One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

March in a praise parade

Play the unit theme song or key passage song. Provide real or artificial palm branches for children to wave as they sing and dance around the room. Consider providing colorful streamers or scarves for children to wave as well.

SAY • The people were happy to see Jesus, but the religious leaders did not like that the **people welcomed Jesus as their King**. They asked Jesus to tell the people to be quiet. Jesus said, “If they didn’t praise Me, the rocks would cry out!” When Jesus comes back as King over everything, everyone will praise Him!

- “Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)” song (optional)
- “If You Confess” song (optional)
- live or artificial palm branches
- scarves or streamers (optional)

Make Easter invitations

Provide paper, crayons, markers, and stickers. Encourage preschoolers to think about a friend they may invite to church on Easter Sunday. Lead preschoolers to make an invitation for that friend. Consider printing adhesive mailing labels with your church’s address and service times for children to attach to their invitation.

SAY • This Sunday is Palm Sunday. Today we celebrate the day Jesus entered Jerusalem as the King of kings. **People welcomed Jesus as their King**, and just a

- paper
- crayons and markers
- stickers
- adhesive mailing labels

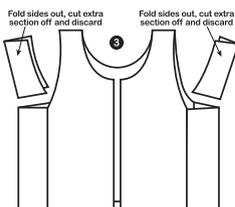
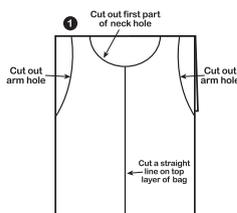
few days later, Jesus died on the cross for sin.

Next Sunday is Easter Sunday. On Easter Sunday, we celebrate that God raised Jesus from the dead. We want everyone to hear the good news of how **Jesus saves us from sin**. Whom can you invite to join us as we remember what Jesus did for us?

Make paper bag robes

Give each preschooler a paper bag and demonstrate how to cut it to make a “robe.” Help preschoolers as needed. Provide crayons, markers, and stickers to decorate their robes. Write **Jesus saves us from sin** on the back of each bag. Invite preschoolers to play out putting their completed robes on the donkey and colt for Jesus to sit on or laying them on the road before Jesus.

- paper grocery bags,
1 per child
- blunt-tipped scissors
- crayons and markers
- stickers



SAY • Jesus’ friends put their robes on the donkey and colt for Jesus to sit on. Jesus came riding on a donkey, just as the prophet Zechariah said He would. The people were so happy to see Jesus, they laid their robes on the road in front of Him. **The people welcomed Jesus as their King.** One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve animal crackers for snack. Guide preschoolers to look for donkeys among their crackers. Explain that many years before, the prophet Zechariah said that the King would come into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, Jesus was showing everyone that He is the King God promised to send. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.**

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of Jesus riding on a white horse. Remind preschoolers that one day, Jesus will come back for His people. He will be riding on a white horse as King over everything. Pray for the children.

SAY • God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our King who saves us from sin. We are looking forward to the day that Jesus comes back riding on a white horse as King over everything. Help us to turn from sin and follow You so we will be ready. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- books
- puzzles
- play dough
- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*