

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: Luke 24:6

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

SMALL GROUP OPENING (15–20 MINUTES) **LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY** (10–15 MINUTES) **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 kids 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!



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The BIBLE STORY

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

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

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 it was right for people to worship Jesus as Savior and King. The Bible says Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 8:37), and He is Lord of all (Acts 10:37). 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;
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KEY PASSAGE: Luke 24:6

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

Welcome time

- "Alive Forever" 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

- "How Do You Travel?" activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Guide preschoolers to think about taking a trip and to circle their preferred mode of transportation on the page.

SAY • In our Bible story today, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey! Let's find out what happened!

Cut fringe on palm leaves

Fold green construction paper in half length-wise. Draw an arc spanning the length of the paper to form half a palm leaf shape. Show older preschoolers how to cut along the line and open the paper to reveal a palm leaf shape. Cut the paper for younger preschoolers. Guide preschoolers to use scissors to make small cuts into the edges of the palm leaf creating a fringe. Demonstrate how to roll up the fringe to make the leaves curl.

SAY • Your palm leaves are beautiful. The Sunday before



- green construction paper
- marker
- scissors

Easter is called Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday is when we celebrate the day Jesus arrived in Jerusalem before He died on the cross for sin. We call it Palm Sunday because the people cut palm branches from trees and laid them on the ground in front of Jesus to praise Him. We will learn more in today's Bible story.

Pin the tail on the donkey

Create a pin the tail on the donkey game by drawing a tail-less donkey shape on a large piece of paper. Use paper and scissors to make several donkey tails. Hang the donkey image on a wall. Blindfold the first child and hand her a donkey tail with tape on the back. Spin her in a circle one or two times. Guide her to attempt to place the tail on the donkey in the proper place. Continue play until each child has a turn. See whose tail is the closest to the correct spot. Consider simply spinning younger preschoolers around instead of using a blindfold.

- paper
- marker (optional)
- tape
- scissors
- blindfold

SAY • A long time ago, the prophet Zechariah said that the king of God's people would one day ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. In Bible times, kings rode horses into battle, but they rode donkeys during times of peace. Let's find out what happened in today's Bible story.

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 move to Bible study by walking on all fours making donkey sounds.

- countdown video (optional)

Large Group LEADER

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Introduce the Bible story

• rock

Invite preschoolers to take turns examining a rock.

SAY • Do rocks talk? I have never heard a rock talk! In today's Bible story, the religious teachers were angry because people were praising Jesus. Jesus said that if the people didn't praise Him, the rocks would cry out. Let's find out what happened.

Watch or tell the Bible story

• Bible

• "Jesus' Triumphal Entry"
video

• Bible Story Picture
Poster

Open your Bible to one of the Bible story passages.

SAY • God's words are in the Bible. That makes the Bible the most important book there ever was or will ever be. Everything in the Bible is true, so today's story from the Bible happened in real life.

Show the Bible story video "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" or tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. Use the bolded version for younger preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

• Main Point Poster

• Giant Timeline or
Big Story Circle

SAY • Many years before, the prophet Zechariah said a special King would come riding on a donkey. Now, He was here! King Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and **people welcomed Jesus as their King.**

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

1. To which city were Jesus and His friends traveling? (*Jerusalem*)
2. What animal did Jesus ride into Jerusalem? (*donkey*)
3. What did the people lay on the road? (*their coats and palm branches*)
4. Were the religious teachers happy that people were praising Jesus? (*No, they were angry.*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Our big picture question is, ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*** Jesus is the King who came to save people from the punishment for sin. **People welcomed Jesus as their King**, and they were right to do so. They called out, “Hosanna!” *Hosanna* means “save now,” and that is exactly what Jesus came to do.

• Big Picture Question Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Luke 24:6. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, “Resurrected.”

SAY • Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, just as the prophet Zechariah said He would. King Jesus died on a cross to save His people, but He didn’t stay dead. He came back to life! One day, Jesus will come back to earth. This time, He will come on a white horse as King over everything.

• Key Passage Poster
• “Resurrected” song

Tip: Define *resurrected* for preschoolers to be when God makes someone alive by His power.

Transition to small groups

Small Group ACTIVITIES

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- "Alive Forever" song
- "Resurrected" song (optional)

Play musical chairs

Set up chairs for one less than the number of preschoolers in your group in an outward facing circle. Play the unit theme song or key passage song while preschoolers march around the chairs. When the music stops, each preschooler should sit in a chair. The preschooler who does not have a chair should shout out, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Then resume play.

SAY • Great job praising King Jesus! You were like the children in today's story who praised Jesus. The people were happy to see Jesus. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** When Jesus comes back riding on a white horse, we will get to praise Him forever!

Act out the story

Encourage preschoolers to act out the triumphal entry. Select a preschooler to be Jesus. Provide a pool noodle for him to use as a donkey. Lead the rest of the class to lay palm branches and coats or fabric on the floor while shouting out "Hosanna to the Son of David!" or other phrases of praise from the Bible story. Take turns allowing different preschoolers to pretend to be Jesus.

- pool noodle
- Bible times clothing (optional)
- coats or fabric
- artificial or paper palm branches

SAY • People welcomed Jesus as their King. 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. One day, Jesus will come back riding on a white horse as King over everything.

Make rock shakers

Assist preschoolers in using a funnel to pour approximately three tablespoons of aquarium rocks into a clean, empty plastic water bottle. Seal the bottle with duct tape. Write the big picture question and answer on a strip of paper. Guide preschoolers to use markers to decorate the paper. Then tape the strip around the water bottle. Play music as preschoolers shake their rock shakers in praise.

SAY • Jesus said that if the people didn't praise Him, the rocks would. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** They shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" in praise. David had been the King of Israel. When the people called Jesus "the Son of David," they were calling Him their King. One day, Jesus will come back as King over everything.

- clean, empty plastic water bottles, 1 per preschooler
- aquarium rocks
- funnel
- duct tape
- paper
- tape
- markers
- "Alive Forever" song (optional)
- "Resurrected" song (optional)

Play a crown and donkey game

Lead preschoolers to sit in a circle on the floor. Select one child to be the king. Direct him to wear a crown and sit in the middle of the circle with his eyes closed. Guide preschoolers to pass a small toy donkey around the circle. When the king says, "Hosanna!" the donkey stops moving and whoever has it holds it discreetly. The king gets three chances to guess who has the donkey. Then the preschooler with the donkey becomes the new king.

- toy or paper crown
- toy donkey

SAY • People welcomed Jesus as their King. 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. One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

Read books about donkeys and horses

- books about donkeys or horses
- “White Horse Picture” printable (optional)
- “Donkey Picture” printable (optional)

Provide picture books featuring donkeys and horses for the preschoolers to look through. Encourage preschoolers to compare donkeys and horses. Use the “White Horse Picture” and “Donkey Picture” printables for examples, if needed. Point out how, in our culture, horses look fit for a king rather than donkeys. Explain to preschoolers that, in Bible times, kings rode donkeys in times of peace.

SAY • Even though Jesus is King of everything, He came into Jerusalem riding a lowly donkey. The people were happy to see Jesus. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** One day, Jesus will come back, He will ride on a beautiful white horse fit for a king.

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. Encourage preschoolers to see if they have donkey or horse crackers in their mix. Remind preschoolers that Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. One day, Jesus will come back riding on a white horse as King over everything.

- 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 wearing a crown. Remind preschoolers that even though Jesus didn't look like a king, **people welcomed Jesus as their King**. Jesus is the true King forever!

SAY • Jesus, You are King over everything! We look forward to the day when You will come back and rescue Your people forever. Help us to obey You while we wait for Your return. 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 Preschool*