

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

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

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

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

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

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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 ... humble and riding 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. Jesus gladly received their praise because He was worthy of their praise. Jesus is the Son of God who came to overthrow sin and set up an eternal throne.

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

Bible Storytelling Tips

• Animate the art:

Choose a volunteer to hold the Bible story picture and walk it slowly across the room as you tell the story.

• Call for response:

When you talk about the crowd praising God, call for kids to shout together, "Hosanna!"

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

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

It was time to celebrate Passover, a special time to remember how God had freed His people from slavery in Egypt. **Many Israelites had traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate** God's amazing rescue.

Jesus and His disciples were among the people who traveled to Jerusalem. When they neared Bethphage (BETH fayj) and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, **Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead into a village. "As soon as you enter the 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.'"

The disciples did as Jesus asked. As they untied the donkey, its owners asked why. "The Lord needs it," they said. Then **they brought the donkey to Jesus, threw their robes onto the donkey, and helped Jesus get onto it. People spread their robes along the road for Jesus, and others spread palm branches cut from the fields.**

The whole crowd praised God with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen. "Hosanna!" they said. "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" The word *hosanna* means "save now." The people welcomed Jesus as their promised King. They hoped He would save them from the Romans.

Some religious leaders asked Jesus to tell His disciples to be quiet. Jesus answered, "If they did not praise Me, the rocks would praise Me!"

While Jesus was in the temple complex, people who

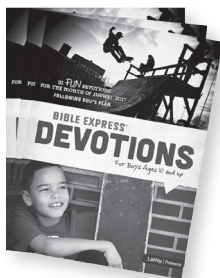
were blind and people who were lame came to Him. **Jesus healed them.** The blind and lame would not have been allowed to worship in the temple.

Other religious leaders saw Jesus' miracles and heard the children saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" They were very angry and asked Jesus, "Do You hear what these children are saying?" They were saying Jesus is a king.

"Yes," Jesus told them. The writer of the Psalms had said, "You have prepared praise from the mouths of children and nursing infants."

Jesus left them and went to the town of Bethany to spend the night.

Christ Connection: During Jesus' triumphal entry, the people welcomed Him as King. Jesus was the Messiah spoken about by the prophet Zechariah: "Look, your King is coming to you; He is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9). One day, Jesus will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything. (Revelation 19:11)



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
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Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover how God's Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce the STORY

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 to Jerusalem as their King.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

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

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt each kid to think about the last time someone came to his or her house. Did kids do anything to make that person feel welcome?

SAY • Today's Bible story is about how people welcomed Jesus when He entered Jerusalem about a week before He died on the cross.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "The Lord Needs It" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete "The Lord Needs It" on the activity page. Kids should connect the dots to discover what Jesus told His disciples to bring Him.

SAY • Jesus was outside of Jerusalem when He told His disciples to bring Him a colt, or young donkey. What an unusual way for Jesus to enter Jerusalem! Let's find out more.



Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Moo, baa, hee-haw

Instruct kids to move to form a circle. Explain that one

player will begin by making one of three animal noises. He may *moo* like a cow, *baa* like a sheep, or *hee-haw* like a donkey. The rest of the players will react accordingly:

- *Moo*: Players to the immediate right and left will stand and jump in place four times.
- *Baa*: Players not immediately next to the “sheep” will clap their hands four times.
- *Hee-haw*: All players will stand, raise their hands, and shout “Hosanna!”

Play then passes clockwise around the circle with each player taking a turn making an animal noise.

SAY • The word *hosanna* means “save now.” Today we will learn why people shouted “Hosanna!” when Jesus came to town.

OPTION 2: Word baseball

Form two teams of kids. On a chalkboard or dry erase board, draw seven blanks (for the word *hosanna*). Invite the first team to guess a letter.

If the letter is in the word, write it in its blank and give the team another guess. If the letter is not in the word, draw an *X* on the left side of the board to indicate a strike. Play passes to the second team. Teams are out if they earn three strikes. For each word a team guesses, award a point.

Play additional rounds with related words. The team to score the most points wins. (Suggested words: *Jesus*, *triumphal*, *Jerusalem*, *donkey*)

SAY • Have you heard all of these words before? Listen carefully to our Bible story today to see what these words have to do with Jesus.

- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or dry-erase marker
- eraser

Transition to teach the story

Teach the STORY

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- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Decorate for Easter over the previous unit theme. Place Easter lilies or palm branches around the stage and incorporate bright spring colors into the other decorations. Display a cross or crown of thorns. You may also display the theme background slide.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire

[Leader enters slowly, walking with feet far apart as if having recently ridden a horse. He or she settles onto a stool with Bible in hand.]

LEADER • Oomph! Hey there, everyone! You'll have to excuse me. Yesterday I spent a few hours riding a horse up part of a mountain. As the snow begins to melt in the spring, flowers start to bloom on the mountain, and they are beautiful! I just hadn't ridden a horse in awhile. What strong, majestic creatures—but they sure aren't the most comfortable! Have any of you ever ridden a horse? *[Pause while kids respond.]*

I see. Have any of you ever ridden a donkey? [*Allow responses. Then hold up a Bible.*]

I've never ridden a donkey, but did you know Jesus did? I think it's about time to hear our Bible story.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • First, let's hear our big picture question: *Who saves us from our sin?* Do any of you know the answer? [*Pause for kids to respond.*] Exactly! Say our big picture question and answer with me: *Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from sin.*

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle. Point to previous stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

LEADER • Let's take a look at our timeline to see where we are. Remember, all the smaller stories in the Bible fit together to tell one big story—the story of how people turned away from God and how He brought us back to Himself by sending His Son, Jesus, to save us from sin.

Today we are going back to hear the story of “Jesus’ Triumphant Entry” because we are celebrating Easter. This Bible story is about what happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem, about a week before His death and resurrection. We remember this event now on Palm Sunday. Listen closely.

• Bibles
• “Jesus’ Triumphant Entry” video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or

show the Bible story video “Jesus’ Triumphal Entry.”

LEADER • When Jesus entered the city, were the people happy to see Him? Yes! Can you imagine that parade of people? The Jews were so happy to see Jesus.

People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

Did you hear what the people shouted when Jesus entered the city? They shouted, “Hosanna!” The word *hosanna* means “save now!” The Jews expected Jesus to be their earthly king and free them from the Romans, who were ruling over them. Jesus had come to save the people, but His kingdom is not an earthly kingdom like the people imagined. Notice that Jesus did not come to save His people by bringing a big army with lots of horses and weapons. Jesus came for a much greater purpose: to save people from sin!

Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. A donkey! That doesn’t seem to me like the type of animal a victorious king would ride. Why do you think Jesus did that? The main reason is that Jesus was fulfilling a prophecy from the Book of Zechariah in the Old Testament. [*Open your Bible and read Zechariah 9:9 aloud.*] The people saw Jesus on a donkey and knew that He was showing them that He was the promised King! However, the other reason Jesus rode a donkey instead of some big, brave warhorse is that Jesus wasn’t coming to be the kind of king the people expected. He came humbly, not to save them from their Roman enemies but for a much greater purpose: to save people from sin.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • *Jesus came to save people from sin.* That’s the

answer to our big picture question! *Who saves us from sin? Only Jesus saves us from sin.*

Just one week after the people gladly welcomed Jesus, they would mock Him and kill Him on a cross. Jesus the King gave up everything—even His own life—so that everyone who trusts in Him can have forgiveness and eternal life. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. One day, He will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Romans 6:9.

• Key Passage Poster
• “Romans 6:9” song

LEADER • A week after **people welcomed Jesus to**

Jerusalem as their King, they killed Him on a cross. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead.

Our key passage says that Jesus will never die again. Death has no power over Him. The greatest power sin has is death. When Jesus rose from the dead, He proved that He conquered the power of sin.

Let’s sing.

Lead boys and girls in singing “Romans 6:9.”

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • **People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their**

King. They waved palm branches, laid their coats in the road, and shouted “Hosanna!” to show that they were happy to see Him. Think about that grand welcome as you watch this video.

• “Unit 32, Session 1”
discussion starter
video

Show the “Unit 32, Session 1” discussion starter video.

Then lead kids to discuss the following questions:

1. How did Zach expect his friends to treat him when

- he returned to school? How did they treat him?
2. What do you do to make someone feel welcome at school or at home?
 3. Why do you think Jesus deserved the welcome He received as He entered Jerusalem?
 4. How can we welcome Jesus into our own lives? What might make Jesus feel unwelcome in our lives?

Sing (4 minutes)

• “Wonderful” song

LEADER • Jesus welcomes us to be part of God’s family. He makes our lives wonderful. Let’s sing.
Sing together “Wonderful.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Lord God, hosanna! Only You can save. Thank You for coming into the world to rescue us from sin and death. You love us so much. Help us to live in a way that brings glory to You. We love You. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply the STORY

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- sticky notes
- marker

Write the key passage in words or phrases on separate sticky notes. Prepare one per kid. Display the key passage poster. Lead the kids to read the key passage together two or three times. Then remove or cover the poster.

Distribute the sticky notes in random order and instruct kids to stick the notes to their foreheads. Challenge kids to arrange themselves in order without talking. When kids finish, prompt each kid to read her sticky note so kids say the key passage collectively.

SAY • Great job! Let's work on memorizing our key passage over the next week. Then next time, I'll see who can say it from memory.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Provide Bibles and instruct kids to open to the New Testament. Ask them to name the first four books of the New Testament. (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*)

Remind kids that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Everything in the Bible is true. God gave us the Gospels so we can know about Jesus, and today's Bible story is found in all four Gospels.

Ask the following review questions. After each question, provide the reference for kids to check their answers.

1. Why had many Israelites traveled to Jerusalem? (*to celebrate Passover, John 12:12*)
2. How many disciples did Jesus send into a village ahead of them? (*two, Matt. 21:1*)
3. What did the disciples find in the village? (*a young donkey, Mark 11:2*)
4. What did people spread on the road in front of Jesus? (*their robes and palm branches, Mark 11:8*)
5. What word did the people say that means “save now”? (*hosanna, Mark 11:9-10*)
6. Who asked Jesus to quiet the disciples? (*the religious leaders, Luke 19:39*)
7. Jesus said if the disciples were quiet, what would praise Him? (*the rocks, Luke 19:40*)
8. Whom did Jesus heal in the temple complex? (*people who were blind and lame, Matt. 21:14*)
9. Where did Jesus go to spend the night? (*the town of Bethany, Matt. 21:17*)
10. Which prophet said Jesus would come, riding on a donkey? (*Zechariah, Zech. 9:9*)
11. What will Jesus ride when He comes again one day? (*a white horse, Rev. 19:11*)
12. ***Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from our sin.***

SAY • We saw in our Bible story today that **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.** They celebrated Him! But Jesus was not the type of king the people expected. They hoped for a king who would overthrow the Romans.

Later that week, Jesus was arrested and killed. But

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

we know the whole story—Jesus did not stay dead!
We will hear more about what happened next time.



• small foam balls

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

- round plastic shower curtain rings
- jingle bells
- ribbon
- scissors

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Empty hands ball toss

Instruct kids to stand in a circle. Lead the kids in playing several rounds of tossing games.

Round 1: Give one player a ball and instruct him to pass it to his left. Kids should pass the ball around the circle as quickly as they can.

Round 2: Give one player two balls. She should pass one to her left and the other to her right. Challenge kids to race and see which ball returns to the original player first.

Round 3: Instruct kids to hold their hands flat and pass the ball around the circle without cupping their hands or using their fingers to hold the ball.

Round 4: Give one player a ball and direct him to toss the ball to any other player. Kids can continue passing the ball across the circle. Then add a second ball. Kids must pay attention and be ready to catch the ball. Add a third or fourth ball depending on the size of your group.

SAY • You have to have empty hands to catch a ball. That reminds me of what we need to welcome Jesus into our lives: nothing but empty hands of faith! We heard in our Bible story today how **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King**. We can welcome Jesus into our lives as King by turning away from our sin and turning to Him.

OPTION 2: Welcome chimes

Demonstrate how to knot the end of a ribbon around a shower curtain ring and then wrap the rest of the ribbon

around the ring to cover it. Knot the other end around the ring to secure it. Provide additional lengths of ribbon for kids to tie onto the curtain ring so some of the ribbon hangs loose. At the end of each length, kids can tie on jingle bells.

Show kids how to attach the curtain ring around a doorknob or handle so that it jingles when someone enters through the door.

SAY • People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

Our chimes can remind us to welcome visitors to our homes. We can also welcome Jesus into our lives. We don't usually wave palm branches, but what are some other ways we can praise and worship Jesus?

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, asking God to soften kids' hearts so they would welcome Him into their hearts and their lives.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Who Said It?" on the activity page. Kids should follow the maze to discover who said what in today's Bible story.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Who Said It?" activity page, 1 per kid