

## 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 6:9

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Who saves us from our sin? 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 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!



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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.

### • **Make it interactive:**

Instruct preschoolers to perform simple actions when you say specific words in the story. Children may put on an imaginary crown when you say *Jesus*, they may bray when you say *donkey*, and they may shout *hosanna* when you say *hosanna*.

## 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 went into 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 is God's Son!

Jesus went to the temple and made the people who were

selling things there leave. While Jesus was at the temple area, 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)*



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# Introduce THE STORY

**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus' Triumphal Entry

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## Welcome time

- “Jesus, Thank You” 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

- “The Road to Calvary” activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Invite preschoolers to complete the maze to get Jesus to the hill called Calvary.

**SAY** • In today's Bible story, Jesus and His friends were traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. 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. Listen to our Bible story to hear what happened.



LOW PREP

Option: Download a “heralding trumpet” sound effect to play as each preschooler is announced.

## Make dramatic entrances

Invite preschoolers to form two single-file rows a few feet apart, facing each other. Two adult leaders should stand side by side at the front of the lines. Choose a preschooler to stand behind the adult leaders. The adult leaders will regally call out “Welcome [child's name]!” and step apart. The

preschooler will then walk through the path of children and join one end of a line. The first child in the line he joined will go next.

**SAY** • Was it fun to be announced as you walked through the line of friends? In today’s Bible story, Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem was exciting. Crowds of people laid their robes or palm branches they cut from trees on the road in front of Jesus as He rode a donkey. People shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One—the King of Israel!”

## Count kingly jewels

Print and cut apart the “Crown Counting Cards.” Set the cards on a table. Invite preschoolers to count flat backed plastic jewels and place the appropriate number of jewels on each crown.

**SAY** • Kings and queens usually wear a fancy, jeweled crown. In today’s Bible story, **people welcomed Jesus as their King** as He rode into Jerusalem. 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!”

- “Crown Counting Cards” printable
- flat backed plastic jewels

Tip: Make sure preschoolers do not put jewels in their mouths.

## Transition to teach the story

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 bow or curtsy as if greeting a king before moving to Bible study.

- countdown video (optional)

# Teach THE STORY

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## Introduce the Bible story

- green strips of paper,  
1 per child
- "Jesus, Thank You" song

Give each child a green strip of paper. Lead preschoolers to walk around in a circle waving their "branches" as the unit theme song plays. When the music stops, direct children to sit down on their "branches."

**SAY** • In today's Bible story, people laid down robes and branches on the road as they and shouted praises to Jesus. Let's listen to the story.

## Watch or tell the Bible story

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

Place a bookmark at Matthew 21 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

**SAY** • The Bible is the most important book there is because the Bible is the only book that has God's words in it. All God's words are true. Today's Bible story comes from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—all four Gospels. The Gospels tell about Jesus' life on earth. 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

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

**SAY** • **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** The children

were correct when they said, “The king is here!” Jesus is the King who rescues His people from sin. One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

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

1. What did Jesus ask two of His friends to bring to Him? (*a donkey and her colt*)
2. What did the people lay on the road in front of Jesus? (*their robes and palm branches*)
3. What does the word *hosanna* mean? (*save now*)
4. What did Jesus say would cry out if people didn't praise Him? (*the rocks*)

## Learn the big picture question

**SAY** • Our big picture question asks, *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.* Jesus knew as He rode into Jerusalem that He was going to the cross. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to rescue people from sin.

• Big Picture Question Poster

## Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Romans 6:9. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, “We Know.”

**SAY** • Our key passage tells us that Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus did everything needed to save people from sin when He died on the cross. He will never die again. One day, Jesus will come back to earth, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

• Key Passage Poster  
• “We Know” song

## Transition to experience the story



# Experience THE STORY

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## Hunt for rocks

Take a walk outside if weather permits. Lead children to look for rocks on their nature walk. Remind children that Jesus said if people did not praise Him, the rocks would cry out. Allow children to choose a rock to bring back inside.

**SAY** • The religious leaders did not like that **people welcomed Jesus as their King**. They thought people should not praise Jesus. They did not believe Jesus is God's Son, but they were wrong. 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 a palm leaf suncatcher

Cut strips from a variety of shades of green tissue paper. Tape a sheet of clear contact plastic sticky side up to a table. Invite preschoolers to cover the plastic with tissue paper strips. When preschoolers are finished, lay another sheet of clear contact plastic over their artwork to seal it. Trim the edges to form a palm leaf shape. Punch a hole and tie a string through the hole. Use a permanent marker to write the main point on each preschooler's suncatcher.

**SAY** • As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, people cut

- green tissue paper in various shades
- scissors
- clear contact plastic
- tape
- hole punch
- string
- permanent marker

palm branches from trees and laid them on the road in front of Him. The people were happy to see Jesus. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** One day, Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

## Play with blocks

Set out people figures, plastic donkeys, and small plastic palm trees in the block area. Invite preschoolers to build the temple and play out Jesus riding toward it.

**SAY • People welcomed Jesus as their King.** When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He went to the temple area. People who could not see and people who could not walk came to Him. Jesus healed them. One day, Jesus will come back to earth, riding on a white horse as King over everything. When He does, He will end pain and sickness forever.

- blocks
- people figures
- plastic donkeys
- small plastic palm trees

## Praise with maracas

Guide a preschooler to spoon dry rice into one side of a plastic egg. Close the egg and put it between the heads of two plastic spoons. Invite the preschooler to wrap colorful tape around the egg and spoons. Then invite her to wrap the bottom of the spoon handles together with tape. Play music while preschoolers shake their maracas.

**SAY •** We praised Jesus with music and instruments. The children in our Bible story praised Jesus saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** Jesus is worthy of our praise. He is our King. One day, King Jesus will come back, riding on a white horse as King over everything.

- plastic eggs
- dry rice
- bowl
- plastic spoons
- colorful tape
- “We Know” song (optional)
- “Jesus, Thank You” song (optional)

• T-shirts

## Play “Follow the Robes”

Designate one side of the room to be Jerusalem. Choose a child to be the donkey while the rest of the group is the crowd. Lead a child from the crowd to lay a shirt on the floor. The donkey will crawl to the shirt. Then another child will lay down another shirt for the donkey to move to. Children will continue laying down shirts for the donkey to follow to Jerusalem.

**SAY** • Jesus came riding on a donkey to Jerusalem, just as the prophet Zechariah said He would. The crowd laid their robes on the road in front of Him. **People welcomed Jesus as their King.** The people were happy to see Jesus. 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 graham crackers for snack. Lead preschoolers to line up their crackers to create a road. Remind preschoolers that as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, He knew He was going to the cross. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to save people from sin. *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*

- 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 happy people. Remind preschoolers the people were happy to see Jesus. They knew He was their King. What a happy day it will be when Jesus comes back riding on a white horse as King over everything. Pray for the children.

**SAY** • God, thank You that Jesus came to earth to rescue us from sin just as You said He would. Help us to turn from our sin and trust in Him. We look forward to the day when Jesus returns as King over everything. 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*