

Use Week of:

Easter • Session 1

Jesus' Triumphant Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19;
John 12

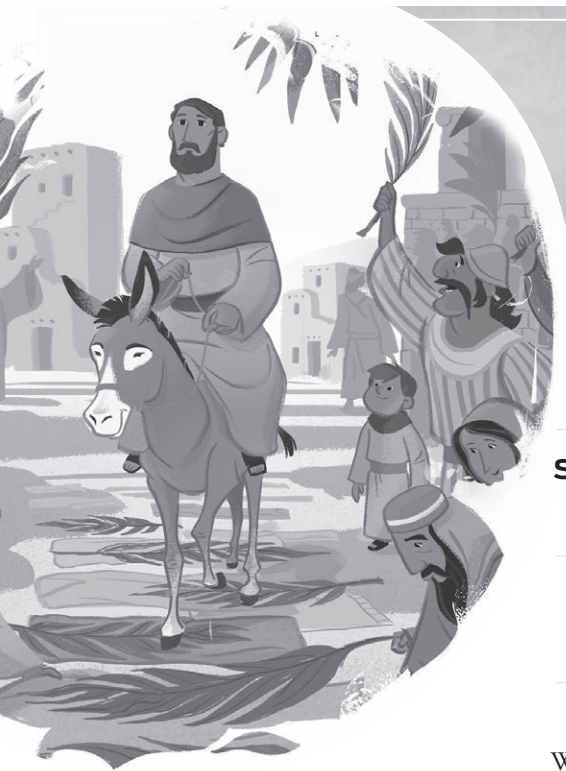
STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus as their King.

KEY PASSAGE:

Romans 10:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.



INTRODUCE THE STORY
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TEACH THE STORY
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EXPERIENCE THE STORY
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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.” (See Isa. 35:4-6.)

Finally, the priests and the scribes heard the children in the temple worshipping 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!

The BIBLE Story

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

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.

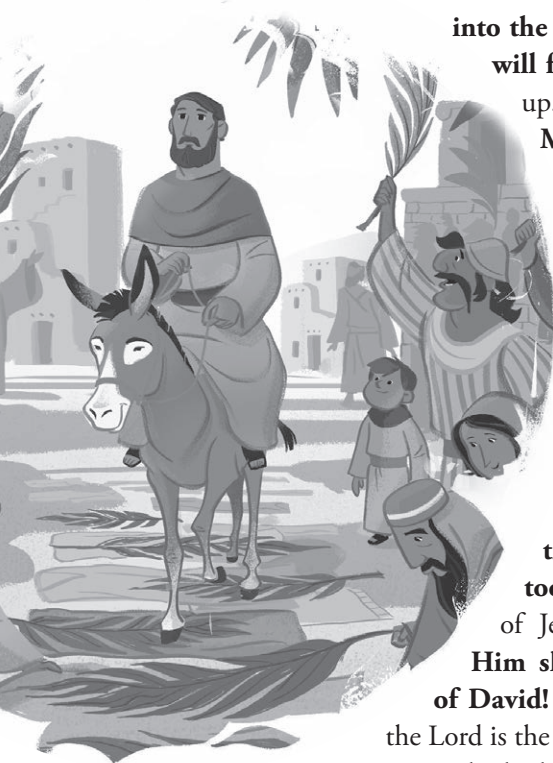
Jesus and His friends also traveled to Jerusalem. He sent two of them ahead to a village. Jesus said, “Go into the village ahead of you. There you will find a donkey and her colt tied up. Untie them and bring them to Me. If anyone says anything to you, you should say that the Lord needs them.”

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)

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*.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

STORY 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

- upbeat worship music
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play upbeat worship music 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
- crayons or markers

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

SAY • What did the dots connect to make? A palm leaf! In today's Bible story, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. The people were so happy to see Jesus they cut palm branches from trees and laid them on the road in front of Jesus! Listen to our hear what else happened as Jesus went into Jerusalem.

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, but He did not wear a fancy crown. 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 tell the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, 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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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- 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. Point to the Bible story picture. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video (optional)

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

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.

Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at Romans 10:9. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Create motions for preschoolers to use as they say the key passage. Repeat the key passage as preschoolers practice the movements and say the verse.

- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster

SAY • *Confess* means to admit or agree. Our key passage tells us that all we have to do to be forgiven of our sin is agree 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.

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Our big picture question for the next several weeks is, *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.* The people in our Bible story cried out “hosanna,” when they saw Jesus. *Hosanna* means “save now.” Only Jesus, the Son of God, can save us from our sin. Lead children in singing worship songs that glorify Jesus.

- Big Picture Question Poster
- worship songs



Missions moment

Read the sentences on the “Finish the Facts” printable, leaving the underlined parts unsaid. Instruct a preschooler to stand if he thinks he can finish the sentence.

SAY • Atlanta, Georgia has many church buildings, but still, many people do not know Jesus or worship Him. This is a surprising fact. Many people in Atlanta do not believe the gospel, but missionaries in the city are telling people that Jesus is the King who saves us from sin. Let’s pray for the people of Atlanta.

- “Finish the Facts” printable

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE The Story



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LOW PREP

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.

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.

- plastic eggs
- dry rice
- bowl
- plastic spoons
- colorful tape
- worship music

He is our King. One day, King 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 an area with blocks. Invite preschoolers to build the temple and play out Jesus riding toward it.

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

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.

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.

- T-shirts

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.



Pray for Atlanta

- “Finish the Facts” printable
- “Atlanta Prayer Card” printable, 1 per child

Option: Serve popcorn as a treat after the prayer time.

Reread the facts from the “Finish the Facts” printable preschoolers heard during the missions moment in Teach the Story. Ask preschoolers to fill in this fact: Where there is a movie, we can eat _____! (*popcorn*)

Show the “Atlanta Prayer Card” and read the prayer requests aloud. Invite preschoolers to join in saying “popcorn prayers” for the city. Explain that you will begin by saying a one-sentence prayer; then you will say, “popcorn” and the name of a preschooler. That preschooler will voice a one-sentence prayer. Then he will say, “popcorn” and the name of another preschooler who will pray next. Be prepared to suggest prayer needs. Continue until each child who wishes to pray has done so. Give each preschooler an Atlanta prayer card. Encourage children to use the card to pray with their families for the people of Atlanta.

SAY • *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.* Many people in Atlanta do not know that they need to be saved from sin or that God sent Jesus to save them. Missionaries in the city are telling people the good news about Jesus. We can help people in Atlanta hear this good news by praying for them and the missionaries living there.

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking 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.***

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

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*)
5. ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page or play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question.

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.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- graham crackers (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers