UNIT 27 | SESSION 3

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

MATTHEW 21; MARK 11; LUKE 19; JOHN 12



CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: *What is justification? Justification is when God says that our sins are forgiven.*

KEY PASSAGE: God made the one who did not sin to be sin for us. 2 Corinthians 5:21

STORY POINT: People praised Jesus as their King.

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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Cultures throughout the world celebrate through the act of parading. Parades see streets lined with people, families and strangers huddled together, united in celebration and anticipation.

Perhaps that's why the triumphal entry resonates so much with us. Jesus' ride into Jerusalem was the closest thing to a parade moment in His earthly ministry. It was filled with prophecy, purpose, and a declaration of kingship.

Before this momentous event, Jesus sent two disciples ahead with strangely specific instructions—go find the colt no one had ever ridden, untie it, and if anyone asks, say, "The Lord needs it." This is an important moment in the narrative because Jesus was not entering Jerusalem as a passive figure swept into events beyond His control; He was orchestrating every detail in His intention to signify that He is the Messiah.

Zechariah had prophesied: "Look, your King is coming to you ... humble and riding on a donkey" (Zech. 9:9). Through His choice of steed, Jesus was declaring Himself that King. The people laid their cloaks down along with palm branches and cried out "Hosanna!"—a Hebrew plea meaning "Save us now!" They were quoting Psalm 118, a psalm of salvation and victory.

And while the people were right to pray for salvation, their thoughts on how Jesus would save were misplaced and way too small. They wanted liberation from Rome. Jesus came to free people from sin. They wanted Him to claim power through a throne. Jesus came to claim power through a cross. They longed for a temporary victory. Jesus was securing eternal peace.

This week, help kids see Jesus as the sovereign King who lived, died, and rose again to answer the plea of "Hosanna, save us now!"



THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session.



10-15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session.



25-30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel.



Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel.

30-40 MINUTES



Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel.



60-65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.

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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tip scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.

WELCOME

Guess what is in the bag
- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ large paper bag
- ☐ toy donkey

LEARN

Find the donkey
- ☐ toy donkey

Tell the Bible story
- ☐ "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video (optional)

Review the Bible story
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ toy donkey

Learn and practice the key passage phrase
- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker
- ☐ scarves

LOVE

Explore and cut nature items
- ☐ leaves and other nature items
- ☐ magnifying glasses

Play classroom instruments
- ☐ a variety of classroom instruments

LIVE

Decorate rocks
- ☐ rocks, 1 per child
- ☐ stickers
- ☐ "Key Passage Phrase Label" printable, 1 copy

Missions activity
- ☐ "Puerto Rico Ministry Center" missions video

Snack and transition
- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families

BONUS

Say the key passage phrase
- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Create with fabric
- ☐ large paper
- ☐ fabric scraps

Spell Hosanna
- ☐ plastic container
- ☐ dried rice
- ☐ magnetic letters
- ☐ metal cookie sheet

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WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers opportunities to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, the story point, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

GUESS WHAT IS IN THE BAG

Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Tape the Bible Story Picture Poster to a large paper bag. Place a toy donkey in the paper bag. Greet kids as they come to the classroom and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Encourage children to reach into the bag without looking and feel what is inside. Invite kids to guess what it is. Look at the Bible Story Picture Poster as you talk about what is in the bag.

> **SAY** *"I am so glad you are at church today. What do you feel inside the bag? It is a donkey. Jesus rode a donkey into the city. The people were excited to see Jesus!* **PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** *They took off their coats and put them on the road. Others found big branches and laid them on the road too. The people shouted, 'Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!' Our big picture question and answer is,* ***What is justification? Justification is when God says that our sins are forgiven.*** *"*

Transition from **WELCOME** *to* **LEARN**



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LEARN the Bible Story

1 FIND THE DONKEY

Hide a toy donkey in the classroom. If you do not have a donkey, draw one on a piece of construction paper. Invite kids to help you find the donkey and bring it to the group-time area. Give clues as needed to assist in finding the donkey.

> **SAY** "You found the donkey. Jesus told two of His friends where they could find a small donkey. The friends found the donkey and brought it to Jesus. Jesus rode the donkey into the city. Listen to the story to find out what happened next."

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Matthew 21 and tell the following Bible story:

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

> **SAY** "Jesus and His friends were on their way to a big city called Jerusalem. Jesus told two of His friends where to find a small donkey. The friends found the donkey and brought it to Jesus. Jesus rode the donkey into the city.
>
> Many people were excited to see Jesus! They took off their coats and put them on the road. Others found big branches from trees and laid them on the road too.
>
> The people shouted, "Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!"
>
> Jesus rode through the streets. The people followed Him, singing and cheering. Jesus loved the people and wanted to help them.
>
> The religious leaders wanted the crowds to be quiet, but Jesus said, "If they were quiet, even the rocks would shout."
>
> Christ Connection: Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever.

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3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Place the Bible Story Picture Poster where the children can see it. Give a child the toy donkey as you ask him a review question. Invite him to pass it to a friend to answer the next question. Assist children as needed to answer questions and do not force a child to answer if he does not feel comfortable. Questions may include, "What animal did Jesus ride into town?" "What did the people place on the road for Jesus?" "What did the people shout?" "Who is God's promised King?"

> **SAY** "*Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever.* **PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** *We can too.*"

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow":

God made the one who did not sin, did not sin, did not sin,
God made the one who did not sin,
To be sin for us.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Corinthians 5:21. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Invite kids to wave scarves as you say the key passage phrase together several times. Say the phrase quickly, then slowly as children wave the scarves to the rhythm.

> **SAY** "*Jesus is the one who did not sin, or act against God. Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever.*"

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God that Jesus loves people and wants to help us follow Him with our minds, words, and actions.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**

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LOVE God because of what we learned

1 TOSS A BEANBAG

LOW PREP

Write the phrases, *Hosanna! Save us, Jesus!* and *You are our King!* on three separate sheets of construction paper. Place the papers on the ground. Invite kids to toss a beanbag toward the papers. If the beanbag lands on one of the papers, say the phrase together. Challenge the older children in your group by instructing them to stand farther away from the papers or tossing the beanbag with their other hand.

> **SAY** "**PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** *The people shouted, 'Hosanna! Save us Jesus! You are our King!' as Jesus rode through the city. The religious leaders wanted the crowds to be quiet, but Jesus said, 'If they were quiet, even the rocks would shout.' The people followed Jesus, singing and cheering. Jesus loved the people and wanted to help them.*"

2 EXPLORE AND CUT NATURE ITEMS

ALLERGY ALERT

Post an Allergy Alert on the classroom door. Place a variety of leaves and nature items on the table, along with magnifying glasses and blunt-tipped scissors. Encourage kids to look at the nature items with magnifying glasses and talk about what they see. Invite children to cut the leaves into smaller pieces and observe them as well.

> **SAY** "*You examined and explored some interesting nature items. The leaves remind me of the leaves and branches that people laid across the road for Jesus to walk on. Jesus rode a donkey into the city. Many people were excited to see Jesus! They took off their coats and put them on the road. The people shouted 'Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!'* **PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS KING.**"

3 PLAY CLASSROOM INSTRUMENTS

Place several classroom instruments out for kids to explore. Demonstrate how to use each instrument to make music. Sing familiar songs such as "Jesus Loves Me" and the key passage phrase song for this unit as children play the instruments.

> **SAY** "*We can use instruments to worship and praise Jesus. The* **PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** *They took off their coats and laid them on the road for Jesus to walk across. The people shouted, 'Hosanna!' They followed Him singing and cheering. The religious leaders wanted the crowds to be quiet, but Jesus said, 'If they were quiet, even the rocks would shout.' Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever.*"

Transition from **LOVE** *to* **LIVE**

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LIVE for God out of love

1 DECORATE ROCKS

Place rocks, stickers, and markers on the table. Invite kids to decorate their rocks. Provide a key passage phrase label to stick on the rocks.

> **SAY** *"The people shouted, 'Hosanna! Save us, Jesus!' The religious leaders wanted the crowds to be quiet, but Jesus said, 'If they were quiet, even the rocks would shout.' You decorated a rock with our key passage phrase. It tells us that God made the one who did not sin to be sin for us. Jesus is the one who did not sin. Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever."*

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Show the "Puerto Rico Ministry Center" missions video.

> **SAY** *"Life has been hard for people in Puerto Rico over the last few years. A hurricane caused great damage to people's homes and businesses. Then they had earthquakes and another hurricane. The Puerto Rico Ministry Center is helping people rebuild their homes and businesses, but they are also helping them to know about Jesus. Churches and missionaries are working with the Ministry Center to help people by giving them food and supplies. Giving people the help they need helps them have opportunities to tell the people about Jesus."*

Pray for more mission teams to come help repair homes and churches, distribute meals to those who need it, and help churches tell more people in Puerto Rico about Jesus.

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION

Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

> **SAY** *"Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever."*

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child learned or did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.

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BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 SHOUT HOSANNA!

Invite kids to shout, "Hosanna!" with you several times as you come to group time. Each time you say the word, lower your voice until you are saying "Hosanna!" in a whisper. Tell children that the people shouted "Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!" as He rode into town.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Matthew 21. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

- Jesus and His friends were going to Jerusalem. Jesus asked two of His friends to bring Him a donkey. Jesus rode the donkey into the city.
- People were excited to see Jesus! They put their coats on the road. Others laid branches on the road. The people shouted, "Hosanna! Save us!"
- Jesus rode through the streets. The people followed Jesus, singing and cheering.
- The religious leaders wanted the crowds to be quiet, but Jesus said, "If they were quiet, even the rocks would shout."

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow":

God made the one who did not sin, did not sin, did not sin,
God made the one who did not sin,
To be sin for us.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Corinthians 5:21. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage together several times, alternating between saying it loudly and softly. Remind kids that Jesus is the one who did not sin.

5 PRAY

Pray, praising Jesus as King and asking God to remind each child of Jesus' power throughout the week.

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BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 MAKE A MEGAPHONE



Place construction paper and markers on the table. Invite kids to decorate their papers. Demonstrate how to roll the paper into a megaphone. Secure with a piece of tape. Encourage children to shout, "Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!" into their megaphones.

> **SAY** *I love your megaphones. People use megaphones when they have an important message to share with a large group of people. Many people were excited to see Jesus when He came to Jerusalem. They shouted, 'Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!' as He rode through the streets.* **PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS THEIR KING.**

7 CREATE WITH FABRIC

Unroll a large piece of paper and place it on the floor. Place fabric scraps and glue near the paper. Invite kids to glue the fabric to the paper. Cut the fabric into smaller pieces as needed. Older children in your group may want to create a pattern with the fabric scraps or work with a friend to create a special design.

> **SAY** *Your fabric art reminds me of the coats Jesus walked across when He went to Jerusalem. Many people were excited to see Jesus! They took off their coats and put them on the road. Others found big branches from trees and laid them on the road too. Jesus rode through the streets. The people followed Jesus, singing and cheering.* **PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS AS THEIR KING.**

8 SPELL HOSANNA

Fill a small, plastic container one-third of the way full with dried rice. Hide the magnetic letters H, O, S, A, N, N, and A in the rice. Write HOSANNA on a small piece of paper and tape it to a metal cookie sheet. Invite kids to find the magnetic letters in the rice and place them on the cookie sheet. Demonstrate how to order the letters to spell *Hosanna*.

> **SAY** *You spelled* HOSANNA. *The people shouted, 'Hosanna! Save us, Jesus! You are our King!' as Jesus rode through the streets. Many people were excited to see Jesus. They followed Him, singing and cheering. Jesus loved the people and wanted to help them. Jesus is God's promised King. He came to save us and help us be close to God. Jesus died and came back to life so that when we trust in Jesus, we can live with Him forever.*

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church's security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.

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