

Unearthing the Truth about the Resurrection: We Can Praise Jesus

Lesson Aim

Jesus is described in many ways and with many names. He is worthy to be praised for who He is and what He has done for us. We can praise Jesus every day.

Opening Activity — Start Strong

PEEPs in a Nest

One player holds a bucket or Easter basket on his head. The other player tosses as many PEEPs as she can into her teammate's bucket in 1 minute. Repeat so that everyone has a chance to take a turn. Prepare a small bag of PEEPS for each child to take home.

Introductory Activity — Make Palm Branches

Gather green and brown construction paper and scissors. You can also just let the kids tear the paper. Lead kids to make palm branches to be used during the Bible story and review activity.

Bible story -- Triumphal Entry (Matthew 21:1-11)

Secure a piece of poster board or a white board. Write NAMES/DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS on the top. Using some post it notes, invite your class to give names or descriptors for Jesus ... Lord, God, Holy Spirit, Good Friend, Compassionate, Savior, etc. and put them on your board. Ask kids to listen as you tell the story and see if there are other names they hear or other descriptors for Jesus.

Tell the story using Triumphal Entry pictures provided and use them to emphasize the important points of this important event.

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 the 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.

Review the Story Options

Act out the Story

Assign volunteers roles of disciples, Jesus, and members of the crowd. Encourage kids to act out the story as you tell it. You might divide the class into three groups. Have the first group say, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Then, the second group will say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Next, the third group will say, "Hosanna in the highest heaven." Repeat several times while alternating the part each group recites. As they act out the story of the triumphal entry, have the three groups shout their phrase at the appropriate time. Repeat the story several times so that the kids can enjoy how the celebration must have been when Jesus came into Jerusalem.

Discussion Questions

- ◆ What did Jesus say his disciples would find in the village? (Donkey and her colt.)
- ◆ How did the disciples prepare the donkey for Jesus? (They laid their cloaks or clothes on them.)
- ◆ What did the crowds spread on the road before Jesus? (Some laid cloaks, others branches.)
- ◆ What did the people shout? Why did they do this? (They shouted Hosanna, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! because they were full of joy.)
- ◆ If you were among the crowds, how would you have shown your joy when you saw Jesus?
- ◆ Why do you think Jesus was riding on a donkey? Why not a horse? (To show humility.)

Picture Card Concentration

Make two copies of the Triumphal Entry picture cards in this curriculum. Use them to have the kids play concentration. You can do the game randomly and just let them find the pictures. To take it to the next level, consider having the kids play the game by finding the pictures in chronological order and have them share what the picture represents. You might make sets of the cards and use them with the kids in pairs or with other adults in small groups.

Resurrection Cards

Each week share the Resurrection Cards with your class and use them to review the story and give your kids the opportunity to use them to tell others. This week's cards are the DONKEY and PALM BRANCHES.

Scripture Verse Focus

Matthew 21:9 — The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Toss Across. Toss or roll a ball to one child. Have him say the first word of the verse before tossing or rolling the ball to someone else, who then says the next word, and so on. Continue until you complete the verse. If the ball is dropped, start over again. Time how long it takes to finish the verse; and try to beat the previous time.

Craft Activity — Treasure Box

Supplies:

- ◆ Popsicle sticks, pre-painted or plain
- ◆ Craft glue / Q tips to apply glue

Directions:

Using the craft sticks and glue, assemble a box that is about 20 layers high and secure them at the corners with glue.

With additional craft sticks and glue, assemble a lid for the treasure box. Let it dry thoroughly before handling. This will be a great container for your kids to store their Resurrection Cards.



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**KIDS MINISTRY
NEW ENGLAND**

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Application Activity — Don't Touch the Ground

Use this game to get kids talking about living lives of praise for Jesus.

Supplies: Bible, green construction paper.

Directions:

Establish start and finish lines.
Form groups of two to four. Give each group three to five pieces of construction paper.

Say: When Jesus came into Jerusalem on a donkey, the people laid some of their clothes in the road to make a path for Jesus. They also took palm branches from nearby trees and laid them on the road.



Say: In our game, your team's goal is to get to the finish line without anyone touching the ground. We'll pretend the paper is the clothes and the palm branches.

Use one team to demonstrate these rules: Only one child can be on a piece of paper at a time. The whole team will start the game with each person standing in line on a piece of paper. The kids will put the extra piece of paper on the floor in front of the line so each of the kids can move forward. Once they've all moved forward, the last person picks up the extra piece of paper at the end of the line and passes it to the front again. Although this isn't a race, they'll repeat this process as quickly as possible so they can reach the finish line without anyone touching the ground.

After the game, ask: What was difficult about this game? What's difficult about following Jesus sometimes? Read aloud Matthew 21:6-11. Ask: What can you lay down in your life so you can focus on Jesus? Why does Jesus deserve our attention and praise?

Your Teaching Notes and Preparation List

Supplies Needed

- Peeps
- Buckets
- Green construction paper for palm leaves and for application activity
- Scissors
- Popsicle sticks
- Glue
- Q-tips
- Triumphal Entry Cards — make 2 or more sets
- Resurrection Cards — make enough sets for each child to have
- Ball for Scripture focus



PRESCHOOL PAGE

If your church has younger learners, you might want to make some adjustments to the suggestions we have. You can use these options in tandem or with a small group of preschoolers separately or incorporate some of them for your younger learners.

Bible Story

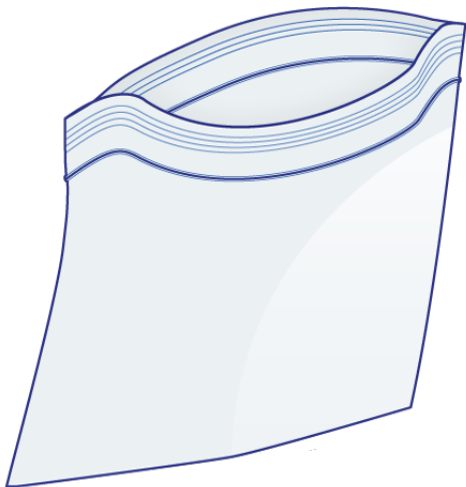
As you tell the story for preschoolers, remember they have a very short attention span and need total engagement. On the average, preschoolers will only sit for 1 minute for every year they are... 2 year old will sit 2 minutes on average, 4 year old will sit 4 minutes on average. Plan to tell the story and not try to read it as this will give you the opportunity to engage the kids with your eyes. Include pictures and fun objects to help capture their attention. You might use the review questions below to help you make sure you include these ideas.

Review Questions for preschoolers

- ◆ "Who was in the story?" Jesus
- ◆ "Where was Jesus going?" To Jerusalem
- ◆ "What was Jesus riding on?" A donkey
- ◆ "What did the people shout?" Hosanna
- ◆ "What were the people holding?" Palm branches and coats

Review Activity — Palm Sunday Parade

Lead your preschoolers to make palm tree branches out of green construction paper. Copy the donkey picture included in this curriculum on cardstock. Cut it out and have your preschoolers color the donkey. Once the donkey is colored attach it to a jumbo craft stick or dowel. Cue up some music and lead your class in a parade around the room and encourage them to praise Jesus using the word Hosanna and the other phrases they learned during the Bible story. Also, have them wave their palm branches and donkeys.



Treasure Bag

Instead of having your preschoolers make the Treasure Box with popsicle sticks, consider this alternative.

Supplies: Quart Size Plastic Zipper Bags, white card stock, stapler, and miscellaneous art supplies (crayons, colored pencils, markers, stickers, foam shapes, pom-poms, glue, etc).

Directions:

Cover the Zipper Bag with the white cardstock and staple to secure.

Guide your preschoolers to decorate the bag with the art supplies provided.

Use their decorated bags to store their Resurrection Cards.

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