



Jesus is our king, and he died for us.

Bible Verse

“Jesus died and was raised to life again” (1 Thessalonians 4:14a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- talk about what it means to be a king,
 - discover that Jesus was a different kind of king than people expected,
 - hear the story of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and
 - use a craft project to praise Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- **Jesus enters Jerusalem as a king.**

Matthew
21:1-11;
Luke 19:28-40

The people expected the Messiah to be a conquering king who would liberate Israel from its Roman oppressors. Many were no doubt looking forward to a new deliverance through the Messianic king, the Son of David. This is seen in what the people shouted. *Hosanna*

is an Aramaic term that means “Save now!” Luke 19:37 mentions that the people were also praising God because of the miracles they had seen Jesus perform. Perhaps the most amazing of these was the raising of Lazarus from the dead just days earlier (John 11:38-44). This miracle showed more clearly the kind of Messiah Jesus would be: He would be the one who delivered people not from foreign political domination but from slavery to sin and death, and he would do it not through political power but through compassion, meekness, and suffering.

Prayer

- Read Mark 10:41-45.
- Do you find the idea of being a servant to those around you difficult?
- How does Jesus’ example help change your thinking?
- Pray: Jesus, thank you for serving us and demonstrating your desire for a relationship with us by dying for our sins. Help me follow your example of service by...


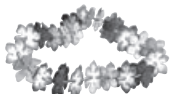








Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help the children remember it and apply it to their lives. Help children learn one point that will stay with them for days and even years to come.

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Hosanna Branches —Make paper palm branches to help tell the Bible story.	Poster board, green crepe paper, scissors, glue sticks	
	Option 2: Donkey Riders —Ride on a “donkey” as Jesus did.	Adult or teenage volunteer	
	Option 3: Building Jerusalem —Build a road to Jerusalem with blocks.	Blocks	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Wear royal “jewels” and be king or queen for a day.	Construction paper, scissors, tape	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hear about Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem from Luke 19:28-40.	Bible, paper palm branches from Option 1, CD player	
	Do the Bible Story —Create a poster to celebrate Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem.	Leaves, shallow pan, tempera paint, paper, newsprint, crayons, damp cloth, clothespin	
Closing 	Bandanna Praise —Tell Whiskers how people shouted “hosanna” for Jesus.	Bandanna, paper palm branches from Option 1, rubber band	
	Palm-Branch Prayers —Pray special thank you prayers, and sing a Bible memory song.	Bible, paper palm branches from Option 1, CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s lesson. Use questions such as “How did you show love to Jesus?” and “How did you show love to someone in your family?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus is our king, and he died for us.**
- Hand out the Easter lily name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate between the activities to offer help as needed, and direct children’s conversation toward the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Have you ever seen a parade?” or “Why do we celebrate Easter?”

■ Option 1: Hosanna Branches

SUPPLIES: poster board, green crepe paper, scissors, glue sticks

Before class, cut poster board into 4x20-inch strips. Cut green crepe paper into 8-inch strips. You’ll need one poster board strip and at least 8 to 10 crepe paper strips for each child.

Set out the poster board strips, crepe paper strips, and glue sticks. Show children how to apply glue to their poster board strips, and then attach a crepe paper strip. Help them attach all their crepe paper. As children work, tell them they’re making palm branches. Explain that people waved palm branches to welcome Jesus to Jerusalem in today’s Bible story.

If children finish early, have them make another palm branch for someone else. You’ll be using the palm branches later in the lesson. If you choose not to use this activity, or if most of the children choose another activity, you’ll need to make your own palm branches before class. Follow the directions in this activity, or simply cut branches out of green construction paper.



◀ BIBLE POINT



teacher tips

Before you begin teaching the lessons on Jesus’ Death and Resurrection, cut the *Learning Mat* into two strips along the dashed line. Trim off the white border, and then tape the strips together, end to end. For today’s lesson, fold the mat so only the triumphal-entry illustration is showing.





At this stage in their physical development, 3- and 4-year-olds have lots of energy and can walk and run with confidence.

■ Option 2: Donkey Riders

SUPPLIES: adult or teenage volunteer

Have an adult or teenage volunteer available to give “donkey rides” to the children. Begin the activity, but then have your volunteer pretend that he or she doesn’t know what to do. Tell children that this donkey needs help, and have them explain what the volunteer must do. They can show the volunteer how to walk on hands and knees and carry a child on his or her back. As children are waiting for their donkey rides, tell them that today’s Bible story is about a time Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.

■ Option 3: Building Jerusalem

SUPPLIES: blocks

Set out building blocks. Encourage children to build houses for the city of Jerusalem and make the long road that Jesus took into the city. As they work, explain that today’s Bible story is about a time Jesus took a special trip to Jerusalem.

When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing “Come Along With Me” (track 2) with the CD to the tune of “Come and Go With Me.” Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



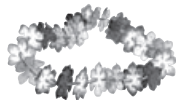
**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: construction paper, scissors, tape



Before class, make a simple crown out of construction paper. Cut a sheet of construction paper in half lengthwise, tape the two halves together end to end, and then tape the ends together. You can cut points or decorate the crown if you like.

Tell the children you’ll turn the lights off and then on again to get their attention. Explain that when you turn the lights off and on, the children are to stop what they’re

doing and be quiet. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Made palm branches; showed a donkey how to give rides; built a road.)

Say: **Some of you built a road and a city, some of you got donkey rides from [name of your volunteer], and some of you made palm branches that we'll use later in our lesson. The people in Jerusalem wanted Jesus to be their king. What does a king do?** (Rules a country; he's the boss; he wears a crown.)

Hold up the crown you've brought, and put it on your head. Put the *flower lei* around your neck. Say: **Kings and queens are important people. They get to make the rules, and if they want something, they usually get it. If I were king [or queen], I'd want to have a palace made out of chocolate.**

Take off the crown and lei, and put them on a child sitting near you.

Ask: • [Name of child], **what would you want if you were king or queen?**

Let the child respond, and continue passing the crown and lei until everyone has had a chance to be a king or queen. Then put the items away.

Ask: • **Those all sound like fun things to do. What do you think Jesus would want if he were the king?** (He'd want us to be nice; he'd want everybody to love each other; he'd want people to share.)

Say: **Jesus would be a good king. He's kind and fair, and he loves us all very much. Jesus loves us and takes care of us like a good and kind king. Today we're learning that ► *Jesus is our king, and he died for us.* We will learn more about why he died for us and how much he loves us.**

Let's bring out our Bible and find out how the people welcomed Jesus as their king.



Three- and four-year-olds may still feel anxious about leaving their parents, so your welcoming presence is important! If children see you smiling at the door week after week, they'll soon offer you their trust and look forward to coming to class.



■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible story, I'll choose someone to be the Bible person. The Bible person will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for that week. Each week one of you will get to be the Bible person. Before I choose today's Bible person, let's learn our Bible song. As we sing, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



**I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *hosanna stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you



If the *ink pad* is dry, moisten it with three to five drops of water.

the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *hosanna stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible], **and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

teacher tips

You can also choose children to be the Bible Replacer (to put the Bible away) and the Cheerleader (someone who can encourage everyone to take part in the lesson). Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week, so each child gets a chance to feel special.

Be sure to emphasize to children that the story comes from the Bible, God's Word.

teacher tips

Punch out the cardboard *Bible figures* and *stands*. For today's lesson, you'll use the figure of Jesus riding the donkey and the figure of the two disciples. Mount these two figures in the stands. Return the other figures to the Learning Lab for use in later lessons.

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, paper palm branches from Option 1, CD player



Open the Bible to **Luke 19**. Say: **Our story comes from the Bible, God's special book. Our Learning Mat shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

Gather the children around in a circle. Set the *Learning Mat: Jesus' Death and Resurrection* on the floor so that only the triumphal-entry scene is showing, and hold up the *Bible figure* of the two disciples. Say: **Once when Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, he sent two of his friends to find a colt or donkey for him to ride.**

Set the figure of the two disciples down on the *Learning Mat* as far away as possible from the picture of the donkey by the stable. Say: **Let's help Jesus' friends find a donkey for Jesus.**

Slowly move the figure along the outer edge of the mat. Stop every few moments, and ask children if they see a donkey near the figure. When you set the figure next to the stable, wait for children to point out the donkey. Then say: **Jesus' friends found a young donkey that no one had ever ridden before. The donkey's owner knew about Jesus, so he was happy to let Jesus' friends borrow his donkey.**

Set the figure of the two disciples aside, and hold up the *Bible figure* of Jesus riding on the donkey. Set the figure of Jesus on the *Learning Mat* near the picture of the stable. Slowly move the figure down the hill and into the crowd as you talk. Say: **Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem. When people saw Jesus, they cheered. They were happy because they thought Jesus was going to be a great king. So they shouted, "Hosanna! Hosanna!" as they followed him into the city. Hosanna**

means something like “Save us!” The people shouted this because they wanted Jesus to be the king and save them from people who were mean to them.

People waved branches from the trees and laid them in front of the donkey so that Jesus could have a special path to ride on.

Soon more people saw Jesus. They followed him, too, and shouted, “Hosanna! Hosanna!” Try saying that with me.

Let children repeat the phrase, and then continue: **You said that so well—almost as if you were really there. Let’s pretend we were really part of that parade. Bring your palm branches and do the actions that I do.**

Help the children gather their paper palm branches and line up behind you. Make sure you have a palm branch, too. Lead the line to the edge of the *Learning Mat*, and begin the “Hosanna Parade” segment from the *CD* (track 6). March with the children around the *Learning Mat*, leading them in the actions printed below.



SING

Barrump-pum-pum! Barrump-pum-pum! (*Pretend to play drums.*)

Let’s have a parade. Now everyone come!

Jesus is coming to town today.

Let’s welcome him! Let’s all make way!

On a donkey’s back he rides. (*Pretend to hold reins.*)

The street’s lined with people down both sides.

Grab a palm branch—let it sway. (*Wave palm branches.*)

Throw coats and branches in his way. (*Lay palm branches on the Learning Mat.*)

Jesus is king! He’s God’s own Son. (*Make a crown with your hands.*)

Have you seen all the wonderful things he’s done?

He heals the sick; he raises the dead.

From one boy’s lunch, 5,000 he fed!

“Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!” we cry (*wave arms over head*)

As Jesus waves and passes by.

We’ll follow Jesus all day long

And gladly sing our hosanna song!

After the segment, stop the *CD* and have children gather around the *Learning Mat*. Return the *Bible figures* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **All the people were so happy. But there was just one thing wrong. They wanted Jesus to be a powerful king who would rule their country. But God didn’t want Jesus to be a powerful king who lived in a palace and bossed everyone around.**



God wanted Jesus to die on the cross so he could forgive us for all the wrong things we do and so we could be friends with him forever. This is the only way we can be friends with God. So Jesus did what God wanted him to do. ► ***Jesus is our king, and he died for us.*** Every year at Easter time, we celebrate how Jesus died on the cross and came back to life. We’re glad he’s our king who loves us. Let’s thank Jesus for being willing to do this for us.

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you that you love us so much that you were willing to die for us. We love you. In your name, amen.**



Bring in Bible costumes or used clothing. Lay the costumes on the floor of your room to mark a “road.” Let children take off their shoes and walk on the costumes. Explain that people laid their coats on the road when Jesus came into Jerusalem.



Listen to “Hosanna Parade,” and practice doing the motions before class. If you’re not sure you’ll remember the motions, copy them onto a sheet of poster board or newsprint and post this where you can easily see it. You’ll want to have your hands free as you lead children through this activity.



■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: leaves, shallow pan, tempera paint, paper, newsprint, crayons, damp cloth, clothespin



Say: ► ***Jesus is our king, and he died for us. Let's keep celebrating that with a craft project!***

Before class, pour tempera paint into a shallow pan. Create a handle for the *sponge kid* by attaching a spring-loaded clothespin to the back.

Write "Hosanna!" in large letters on the newsprint. Place this where children can easily reach it.

Say: **As Jesus rode through town, people threw palm branches on the ground in front of him and shouted, "Hosanna...blessed is the King!" (NIV). We're going to make leaf pictures and a "Hosanna!" poster to celebrate Jesus as our king. We can each make a person celebrating Jesus' arrival.**

Give each child a leaf, paper, and crayons. Demonstrate how to place the leaf beneath the paper and color the paper on top in order to reveal the impression of the leaf.

While children are coloring their leaves, ask one or two children at a time to come up to the table where you have the "Hosanna!" poster. Help each child press the *sponge kid* into the paint tray and add to the poster. Work with children to carefully push down on the *sponge kid* and then lift it straight up.

When each child has had a turn adding to the poster, place the poster on a wall in the room. Allow the children to take the leaves they've colored home to remind them to tell others about today's Bible story.

Clean the *sponge kid* with a damp cloth, and return it to the Learning Lab.



The greenery used in floral arrangements works particularly well for this craft project.

Closing

■ Bandanna Praise

SUPPLIES: bandanna, paper palm branches from Option 1, rubber band

Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Before class, use a rubber band to attach a bandanna to Whiskers' paw. Bring out Whiskers, and go through the following script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers and the bandanna away.



- **Whiskers:** (*Waving bandanna*) Bandanna! Bandanna!
- **Teacher:** Why hello, Whiskers. That's a very nice bandanna you've got.
- **Whiskers:** (*Waving bandanna*) Bandanna! Bandanna!
- **Teacher:** Yes, we see your bandanna. Isn't that a nice bandanna, boys and girls?



- Whiskers:** *(Looks around and then puts down bandanna.)* Hey, how come I'm the only one with a bandanna? A few minutes ago I heard everyone shouting, "Bandanna! Bandanna!" so I ran home to get my bandanna. Now no one else has one.
- Teacher:** Oh, Whiskers. Your friends weren't shouting "bandanna"; they were shouting "hosanna." That's what the people shouted when Jesus came into Jerusalem.
- Whiskers:** *(Hiding bandanna behind his back)* Oh...well...I also heard you saying something about a king. Is there a king here?
- Teacher:** Children, we'd better tell Whiskers the whole story. He seems very confused. *(Lead children in telling today's Bible story to Whiskers.)* The people in our story wanted Jesus to be their king. But Jesus didn't come to be their king. He came to die on the cross and come back to life again so we can be friends with him.
- Whiskers:** Didn't Jesus want to be the king? If someone asked me to be the king, I'd say yes right away.
- Teacher:** ► Jesus is our king, and he died for us. God had a special plan for Jesus, Whiskers. God didn't want him to stay on earth and rule as king. Instead, God wanted Jesus to die for us and come back to life. Now Jesus is our king who watches over us and loves us. He's our friend.
- Whiskers:** Can he still hear us if we shout "hosanna"?
- Teacher:** Of course. Would you like to shout "hosanna" with us? We'll wave palm branches, and you can wave your bandanna.
- Whiskers:** I'd like that.
- (Lead the children and Whiskers in shouting "hosanna.")*
- Whiskers:** Thanks for telling me that story. I'm glad Jesus died for us. I'm going to say "hosanna" to him every night before I go to bed this week. Goodbye. See you next week.

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■ Palm-Branch Prayers

SUPPLIES: Bible, paper palm branches from Option 1, CD player



Have children bring their paper palm branches and sit in a circle. Open your Bible to **1 Thessalonians 4:14a** and show children the words. Say: **The Bible tells us ► "Jesus died and was raised to life again." We're glad that Jesus died and came back to life so he could be our friend and king. Let's go around the circle and take turns thanking Jesus. When it's your turn, put your palm branch in the center of the circle and say, "Thank you, Jesus."**

Lay your palm branch in the center; then let children take turns laying their branches down and saying, "Thank you, Jesus." Then lead children in singing "Jesus Died and Was Raised" (1 Thessalonians 4:14) to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It," which will help them learn and remember the Bible verse. This song is track 7 on the CD.

◀ **BIBLE VERSE**



**Jesus died and was raised to life again.
Jesus died and was raised to life again.
Jesus died and was raised.
That's why we will give him praise.
Jesus died and was raised to life again.**
(Repeat.)

Close with a prayer similar to this one: **Dear God, we're glad that you had a special plan for Jesus. Thank you for sending him to die on the cross for us and then come back to life again. Help us remember to thank you for this each day. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Donkey Parade**

Form two groups. Have one group be Donkeys and the other group be Palm-Branch Wavers. Let the Palm-Branch Wavers use the branches they made earlier in the lesson, and have them make two lines facing each other so their branches can touch.

Let the Donkeys crawl through the line of Palm-Branch Wavers. Have the Donkeys say “heehaw” as they crawl through. Have the Palm-Branch Wavers say, “Hosanna! The king is coming!” After all the Donkeys have crawled through, have children switch roles and repeat the activity.

■ **Make to Take: Clothespin Donkeys**



Give each child three wooden craft clothespins. Show the children how to use glue dots to hold the clothespins together in the shape of a donkey. Have them use fine-point markers to draw eyes and noses on the donkey faces. Then give each child a 2-inch piece of brown or black yarn to glue onto the donkey as a tail. As children work, talk about Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. Remind them that ► Jesus is our king, and he died for us.

■ **Treat to Eat: Royal Crowns**

teacher tips

Candy Modeling Dough

Mix 1 pound powdered sugar, 1/3 cup corn syrup, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/3 cup softened margarine, 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring, and 5 drops food coloring. Knead, adding more powdered sugar if the dough is too sticky.



Help children clean their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes. Give each child a piece of candy modeling dough. Show each child how to shape the dough into a crown by rolling it into a ball and pressing a thumb in the center. Remind children that ► Jesus is our king, and he died for us.



■ **Story Picture: Jesus Enters Jerusalem on a Donkey**

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson). Set out crayons or markers, glue sticks, and short pieces of brown or black yarn. Have children glue pieces of yarn to the donkey mane and then color the pictures. As they work, review the details of today’s Bible story. Remind children that ► Jesus is our king, and he died for us.

Today I learned... 

 Jesus is our king,
and he died for us. 

Help me learn this:

"Jesus died and was raised to life again"
(1 Thessalonians 4:14a).

Ask me:

- What did the people say as Jesus rode into Jerusalem?
- How can you praise Jesus this week?
- How can our family praise Jesus together?

Family Fun

- Buy an amaryllis bulb and plant it. As you bury it, talk about Jesus' death and resurrection. Water and care for your bulb throughout the Easter season. Your bulb will come to life quickly! Talk about how Jesus came back to life in three days.
- Help your child create a simple floral arrangement with carnations and palm fronds. Ask your child to explain how palm branches were used to celebrate Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem.

Lesson 2
Today your child learned that **JESUS IS OUR KING, AND HE DIED FOR US.** Children heard how Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and they celebrated this event.

Jesus Enters Jerusalem
on a Donkey (Luke 19:28-40)

