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The Triumphal Entry , Hosanna!

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-17, Luke 19:28-44

Theme: Jesus is the King who came to serve, not to be served

Nursery (Ages 0-2)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

"Jesus is King of love!" "Jesus came to be kind and help us all, like a gentle king on a donkey!" "The Bible says, 'Hosanna!', that means 'Help us!', because Jesus loves you so much!" Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

God's Big Love for Us

One day, Jesus rode on a donkey into the city where everyone cheered. "Hosanna!" they shouted, meaning "Save us!" because they knew God loved them very much.

The children waved their cloaks and sang, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" They showed their love like little flowers waving to Jesus.

Jesus sat among them, and the people saw how kind He was. He healed the sick and smiled at everyone.

God wants to love us too, just like Jesus did. Every day, we can wave our hands and sing "Thank you, God!" to show how much we love You.

--- Why this story matters: Jesus wanted to show God's love by coming to us, just like a big hug! When we love and cheer for God, we remind others that He always loves us first.

Key Verse

Luke 19:38 , 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!'

"God loves you so much!" The king says, "Peace and love are coming, just like a hug from God!" God is happy to give you His big, gentle love every day!

Activities

Activity 1:

Toddlers act out Jesus riding on a donkey while singing a simple song about God's love.

1. Show the Picture & Read Together: Hold up the picture of Jesus riding the donkey. Say, "Jesus rode on a donkey to show God's love for us!" (Repeat: "God loves you!")
2. Act It Out: Give each child a stuffed donkey or a toy. Walk slowly like Jesus riding the donkey, then stop and sing:
3. "Hosanna! Hosanna! Jesus rides today!"
4. Draw a Branch: Give each child a paper strip to color like palm branches. Say, "Jesus waved his palm branches to say, 'God is so good!'" Let them glue theirs to the picture.
5. Pray Together: Close with a simple prayer: "Dear God, thank You for loving us so much. Amen!"

Activity 2:

Toddlers practice showing love by hugging or giving "grace" to their friends, inspired by Jesus washing feet (Luke 19:44).

1. Read a Tiny Verse: Show a Bible with Matthew 21:17. Say, "Jesus showed God's love by helping others. Let's show love too!"
2. Practice Hugs or Grace: Hold hands in a circle. Say, "God loves you so much! Let's give a little hug!" Hug each friend. For older toddlers, say, "Jesus washed feet to show love, let's 'wash' hands with grace!" Pour a little water (or pretend) and dry with a towel.
3. Draw Love Hands: Give each child a paper to draw their hands. Say, "Draw how God loves you with big hands!" Crayon the hands and glue them to a Bible page.
4. Sing & Share: Sing "Love Is Kind" (simple tune) while sharing: "God's love is like a hug, it's for you and me!"

Discussion Questions

- Here are four simple, open-ended discussion questions for babies and toddlers about God's love in The Triumphal Entry:
- "Jesus rode a donkey to show God is very kind! What animal is big and brown, like Jesus' donkey?" (Then ask, "How can you be like Jesus and show God's love to others?")
- "When Jesus came, people made a big noise with shouts, 'Hosanna!', because they loved Him. How can you shout 'Hosanna!' today?" (Pause for giggles and repeats like: "'Hosanna!' for Jesus!")
- "Jesus told the animals to stay quiet because God wanted everyone to hear Him. What sound does your little animal make?" (Hold up stuffed animals or let them imitate animals while whispering, "Jesus wanted us to listen to God's love!")
- "In the Bible story, people waved branches and said, 'Thank you, Jesus!' How can you give a small 'thank you' to God, like waving a leaf or drawing a smiley face?" (Repeat: "God loves you so much! Thank Him today!")

Prayer Focus

"Dear Jesus, come to us with love. "We love You, and You are so kind!" "Bring Your happy love today!"

>> Missions Spotlight

In Jerusalem today, Palm Sunday is celebrated on the very streets where Jesus rode. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem , and that the Jewish people would recognize Jesus as their Messiah, the King who came riding on a donkey.

-> To the Cross

The crowds shouted 'Hosanna!' and waved palm branches. They wanted a king to defeat Rome. But Jesus came to defeat sin and death. He rode a donkey, not a war horse. One week later, the same crowd would shout 'Crucify Him!' Only the cross could save them.