


# Crowds Welcome Jesus to Jerusalem

Psalm 118:19-29; Matthew 21:1-11

Third- and fourth-graders love it when the “good guys and girls” in stories receive the praise and honor due to them. They’ll enjoy hearing about Jesus entering Jerusalem to the shouts of praise from the crowds. Use this lesson to help them give Jesus the praise he deserves because of his great love for us.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Getting Started</p>	<p><b>Worthy of Praise?</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i></p> <p>Look at current pop idols and talk about why they’re worthy of praise (or not).</p>	<p>a variety of “teen” magazines featuring current pop stars and celebrities</p>	
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Bible Exploration</p>	<p><b>Path of Praise</b> <i>(about 20 min.)</i></p> <p>Create a path of praise using paper coats and palm leaves.</p>	<p>Bibles, CD player, various colors of construction paper, 1 sheet of green construction paper per child, pens, markers, scissors</p> <p><b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, “Donkey” pictures</p> 	<p>Cut apart the “Donkey” pictures and hide them around your room, remembering where you hid them.</p>



► **Bible Point**  
We praise Jesus.

**Key Verse**  
“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Revelation 5:12).

**Weaving Faith Into Life**  
Kids will praise Jesus in a specific way this week.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life	<b>Jesus Deserves My Praise</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Make edible palm branches, and praise Jesus.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, round fruit leather, paper plates, plastic knives, pens, antibacterial gel (optional), copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	<b>Instruments of Praise</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse, and make praise shakers.	Bibles, CD player, 2 paper plates and several beads per child, 2-3 washable liquid watercolor paint colors, 2-3 shallow containers, leaves (real or fake), stapler, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Prepare watercolor paints. Put them in shallow containers and set them aside.
<b>4</b> Lasting Impressions	<b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	<b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		



# Crowds Welcome Jesus to Jerusalem

Psalm 118:19-29; Matthew 21:1-11

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## What Was He Thinking?

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In this passage, why did Jesus send his disciples to “borrow” a donkey and her colt without asking? And why would he tell them to respond, “The Lord needs them” if questioned? Some have speculated that Jesus had arranged in advance to borrow the donkey. Others suggest that he likely knew the owner and knew the donkey would be offered if needed. Or, as God, he may have already known how the owner would respond.

Jesus obviously couldn’t ride both animals at the same time. Riding on a colt fulfilled the prophecy from Zechariah 9:9 and demonstrated Jesus’ humble spirit. The mother donkey likely walked alongside her colt, since it would have been typical for a donkey to accompany her colt wherever it was led.

## A Carpet of Cloaks

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Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem was the high point of his earthly ministry. Military victors were often honored with such a procession when they returned from battle. People placing their cloaks as a carpet on the street was an act of honor and of submission. The people also used cut palm branches as a victory celebration for Jesus. These acts fulfilled other prophecies about Jesus.

## A Garment of Praise

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The passage the people quoted as they shouted “hosanna” is Psalm 118:25-26, where the word *hosanna* is translated “Lord save us!” Or it could be simply translated “Save!” used as an expression of praise.

The crowd stirred up the city so dramatically that many asked who Jesus was. Yet five days later, a crowd in that same city demanded Jesus be crucified

(Matthew 27:22-26)! If the events ended there, we would have little reason to praise. But when Jesus rose from the dead, he demonstrated that he truly was God.

## The Jesus Connection

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Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection made it possible for us to have eternal life through a relationship with him. He is the reason for our hope and our happiness. Praise Jesus for everything he is!

Praising Jesus is about more than just thanking him—it keeps us focused on his love for us. Jesus wants us to praise him publicly and privately, so others see his love as well. What can you personally praise Jesus for? Praise him by writing down four or five things he has done for you, and thank him. Share your praises with someone else so that person can be blessed, too. You can write your praises here.

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### Worthy of Praise? Supplies

a variety of “teen”  
magazines featuring  
current pop stars and  
celebrities

## 1 GETTING STARTED

### Worthy of Praise?

#### What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **The entertainment industry constantly looks for people who appeal as heroes to people your age. They know that music sales and television ratings depend on the popularity of these heroes.**

Pass out the teen magazines showing current celebrities who appeal to kids. Have kids work in pairs to choose one celebrity, and have them talk about why the person they chose is popular and praiseworthy. Tell them to be prepared to share their “hero” with the whole group. If they cannot find someone they consider heroic, have them explain why others might find certain celebrities heroic.

Give pairs time to look through the magazines, pick a hero, and prepare their presentations to share with the whole group.

Say: **Okay, let’s look at who you picked as someone the world thinks is popular and worthy of praise.**

Have pairs share their heroes and why the world thinks they’re worthy of praise. When all have shared, collect the magazines and thank kids for their participation.

#### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What are some things that all of our popular heroes have in common with each other?**
- **Why are they or are they not worthy of praise from the public?**
- **What makes them popular?**

Say: **Every generation has its pop stars and idols, and there’s nothing wrong with that. But what makes someone worthy of genuine praise? We’ll look at the day that Jesus was welcomed and praised by the crowds. We’ll also discover how ► WE PRAISE JESUS. Let’s discover how the people in our Bible passage praised Jesus.**



2

BIBLE  
EXPLORATION

# Path of Praise

## What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Form groups of four, and make sure each group has a Bible. In their groups, have kids open their Bibles to Matthew 21:1-7.

Say: **In your groups, choose two people to be the disciples sent by Jesus to get the donkey and her colt. Choose one person to be Jesus. The last person will be the Narrator, who needs to be able to read the passage aloud. In your groups, read and act out Matthew 21:1-7. When you get to the part of the disciples going to get the donkey, send the two over to me.**

Stand off to the side of the room. Give kids time to assign roles and do the activity. When the two Disciples come to you for the donkey, ask them why they need it. Then give them clues to find one of the donkeys you hid around the room. Give each group a different clue.

When all the groups of four have acted out Matthew 21:1-7, thank kids for their participation and ask them to return to their seats.

Set out construction paper, markers, and scissors for kids to share. Have them each design and create a coat from one of the various colors of construction paper. Encourage them to create colorful coats and assure them that they don't have to be perfect.

Play "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3 on the CD) while kids work.

After several minutes, have kids finish creating their coats. Ask willing children to show their coats to the whole group.

Say: **In today's Bible passage, people praised Jesus on that day when he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and hailed him as the Son of David. One of the things we'll do today to praise Jesus is to create a "praise path" by laying our coats on the ground.**

Have kids write one way to honor Jesus on the coats they've cut out. You may want to suggest things such as "being nice to my little brother or sister," "thanking Jesus for a beautiful day," "obeying my parents," or "reading my Bible."

Have kids lay their coats in a path on the floor of your room. Let them make the path a fun one, winding from one side to the other and curving in various places as it goes. When kids have finished, have them come stand by you; then send them each to stand by a coat that's not theirs. Ask willing kids to read what's written on the coats they're



## Path of Praise Supplies

- Bibles
- CD player
- various colors of construction paper
- 1 sheet of green construction paper per child
- pens
- markers
- scissors
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3)
- "Donkey" pictures

## Path of Praise Easy Prep

Cut apart the "Donkey" pictures and hide them around your room, remembering where you hid them.





standing by. Then have them tell how that would honor Jesus. For example, if the coat says “Obey your parents,” kids could say, “Jesus says to obey our parents. So by obeying my parents, I’m honoring Jesus.” Give each child an opportunity to share.

Have kids share scissors, and give a piece of green construction paper and a pen to each child. Read aloud Matthew 21:8.

Say: **We’re going to do what the crowd did in our Bible passage. We’re going to add to the praise path we started earlier. Then we’ll imagine Jesus riding the donkey on the path we’ve created.**

**Cut out a “palm branch” from your construction paper. When you’ve finished, we’ll lay these on our praise path.**

Have kids continue making the praise path in your room by laying the branches they’ve just made along the path, going from one corner of the room to the other. When the path has been laid out, have kids stand side by side along the path.

Say: **Let’s imagine that Jesus is riding along this path. We’re going to praise Jesus with the words in Matthew 21:9.**

Read aloud Matthew 21:9, pausing after each line for kids to repeat it after you. Repeat this verse three or four times. Then read Matthew 21:10-11.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What can you learn from the ways people praised Jesus when he entered Jerusalem?**
- **How does laying a coat on the ground show honor?**
- **What’s something you could give up as a way to praise Jesus?**
- **Why does Jesus deserve our praise?**

Say: **When the people laid down palm branches and coats while shouting blessings and “hosannas” to Jesus, they recognized him as worthy of praise. On that day, the people loved, respected, and admired Jesus and hailed him as the One who comes in the name of the Lord. ► WE PRAISE JESUS every day when we love, respect, and admire him with our actions and words.**





**3**

**WEAVING FAITH  
INTO LIFE**

# Jesus Deserves My Praise

## What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **In our Bible passage today, we learned how the people in Jerusalem praised Jesus. But remember, the people not only praised Jesus with their words, they also praised him with their actions by laying their coats and palm branches on the road for him. We can follow their example and praise Jesus with our words and with our actions. These actions might include being kind and loving to others, helping to feed the poor, or obeying parents and teachers. Let's make some things to help us praise Jesus with our actions.**

Have kids wash their hands or use antibacterial gel; then help them form pairs.

Say: **As Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people laid down palm branches in his path to honor and praise him. Let's make pretend palm branches from fruit leather to remind us of the way the people praised Jesus.**

Give one piece of round fruit leather on a paper plate to each child. Have kids use plastic knives to make cuts in their fruit leather to imitate the shape of a palm branch, as pictured. As they're working on their fruit leather palm branches, have them call out ways they can praise Jesus.

Say: **Just as the people in our passage praised Jesus with their actions by waving and laying down palm branches, we can praise Jesus with our actions this week. Before you eat your palm branch, pray with your partner to thank God for your snack and ask God to help you remember to praise him this week. When you're finished praying together, you may eat your palm branch.**

Let kids pray together and then eat their palm branch snacks. Then have them help clean



## Jesus Deserves My Praise Supplies

- .....
- Bibles
- Bible Truth Sleuth
- CD player
- round fruit leather
- paper plates
- plastic knives
- pens
- antibacterial gel (optional)
- copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)

### Teacher Pack

- CD: "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) (track 2)

### ! ALLERGY ALERT

## Jesus Deserves My Praise Easy Prep

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Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.






up from snack time. After kids have cleaned up, help them find Revelation 5:12 in their Bibles, and have them read the Key Verse aloud: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Say: ► **WE PRAISE JESUS because he lived and died for us. He’s called the Lamb because he sacrificed his life so we can live. Let’s praise Jesus for loving us and giving us eternal life.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “I Am the Resurrection and the Life” (John 11:25) (track 2 on the CD). After they listen once, have kids sing along and do the motions.

 (clap to the beat)

**I am the resurrection and the life!** (raise hands high; then pat chest to the beat)

**He who believes in me will live,** (point to head; then jump and spread arms and legs wide)

**Even though he dies.** (crouch low)

(Repeat.)

**There’s no! other way to the Father.** (punch fist in the air on “no”; then raise hands high)

**No! other way to the Son.** (punch fist; then raise hands high)

**No! other way to Jesus.** (punch fist; then motion “Jesus” by pointing right middle finger to left palm, then left middle finger to right palm)

**We must believe, we must believe,** (point to head two times)

**We must believe in him alone!** (point to head; then jump high)

**I am the resurrection and the life!** (raise hands high; then pat chest to the beat)

**He who believes in me will live,** (point to head; then jump and spread arms and legs wide)

**Even though he dies.** (crouch low)

(Repeat.)

**I am the resurrection and the life!** (raise hands high; then pat chest to the beat)

**I am the resurrection and the life!**

“I Am the Resurrection and the Life” (John 11:25) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **Today we’ve made crafts, sung a song, and acted out our Bible passage about praising Jesus. Now it’s your turn to give your own specific words of praise to Jesus.**

Have kids turn to the “Jesus Deserves My Praise” activity in their Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have them write reasons Jesus deserves their praise. Give them a few minutes to write. Then have them find a partner and share what they wrote.





### Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What were some of the words you wrote to praise Jesus?
- What are actions we can do to show our praise to Jesus?
- What are reasons that it's important to praise Jesus in both words and actions?

Say: Praising Jesus is good—for Jesus, for us, and for others. Praise isn't just something we do in worship at church, but in everything we do each day. Like the people on that first Palm Sunday, ► **WE PRAISE JESUS** because we want to, not because someone forces us to do so. Let's close with an activity that shows our praise for Jesus.

## Instruments of Praise

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Revelation 5:12, and read the verse again to the kids: **“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”** Point out the supplies for the craft.

Say: **When people from Bible times praised God, they often used musical instruments. Let's use these craft materials to make tambourines that we can use to praise the Lamb, Jesus.**

Have kids carefully dip the leaves into the paints. Then have kids decorate the outside of two paper plates by lightly stamping a few leaf prints. Place several beads on a plate for each child; then cover each plate with another plate. Staple around the edges of the plates to make sure the beads will stay inside the tambourine.

Say: ► **WE PRAISE JESUS, the Lamb of God, who deserves our praise. Let's all read our Key Verse one more time as we gently shake our new praise tambourines.**



### Instruments of Praise Supplies

- .....
- Bibles
  - CD player
  - 2 paper plates and several beads per child
  - 2-3 washable liquid watercolor paint colors
  - 2-3 shallow containers
  - leaves (real or fake)
  - stapler
  - copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
  - Teacher Pack**
  - CD: “Jesus Loves Me Rock” (track 3)

### Instruments of Praise Easy Prep

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Prepare watercolor paints. Put them in shallow containers and set them aside.





Lead kids in reading aloud Revelation 5:12: **“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”**

Say: **Let’s bow our heads and close our eyes. We’re going to be quiet for about one minute. During that time, I want you to think about the reasons Jesus deserves your praise. When we’ve finished, we’ll close with a prayer and say our praise statements to Jesus.**

After one minute, have kids speak their praises to Jesus.

Say: **Now, let’s do some serious praising of Jesus by singing a praise song, doing praise motions to it, and then singing it again with our new instruments.**

Pass out copies of lyrics, and play “Jesus Loves Me Rock” (track 3 on the CD). The first time, have kids sing the lyrics and do the motions. Then play the song again, and this time have the kids sing while using their praise tambourines.



**Jesus loves me; (echo)** (*hug self*)

**This I know, (echo)** (*point to head with both pointer fingers*)

**For the Bible (echo)** (*put hands side by side like a book*)

**Tells me so. (echo)** (*point to self with thumbs*)

**Little children (echo)** (*hold hands out, palms facing down*)

**To him belong. (echo)** (*raise arms*)

**They are weak, but (echo)** (*swing arms from side to side*)

**He’s so strong! (echo)** (*make muscleman arms*)

**Jaaaayyy! (J)** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Eeeeeeee! (E)** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Ssssssss! (S)** (*bend arms at elbows, swing them back and forth*)

**Uuuuuu! (U)** (*raise arms*)

**Ssssssss! (S)** (*bend arms at elbows, swing them back and forth*)

**And what’s that spell?** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)

**And who do you love?** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)

**And who loves you?** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)

**Who died for you?** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)

**And who’s your guy?** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)

**The apple of your eye!** (*cup hands around mouth*)

**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)



**And who's your friend?** (*cup hands around mouth*)  
**Jesus!** (*raise both fists*)  
**He'll love ya to the end!** (*cup hands around mouth*)

"Jesus Loves Me Rock" by Dean-o. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

### Talk With Kids

Ask everyone to have a seat. Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to praise Jesus so enthusiastically with our song and instruments?**
- **What can we do when we don't really feel that enthusiastic about praising Jesus?**
- **What are the rewards for praising Jesus to others and ourselves?**

Say: **Today we've remembered that day when crowds laid down their coats and tree branches to honor Jesus as he passed by on his entry to Jerusalem. The crowds praised him with shouts of "hosanna!" It's also important to remember, however, that the crowds would soon turn against him and that he died on a cross. When they didn't feel like praising Jesus anymore, the people turned completely the other way! ► WE PRAISE JESUS with all our energy, all the time. He's the Lamb of God, who was slain, to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise!**

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## **4** LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do

Say: Let's think about how we can praise Jesus this week.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Pray for two minutes every morning after waking up, praising Jesus for all he does for you.**
- **Think about the Key Verse on your Bible Truth Sleuth page and give thanks in prayer for Jesus, the Lamb of God who was slain and came back to life.**
- **Listen to at least one praise song a day and sing along.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids



Daily Challenges  
Supplies

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Bible Truth Sleuth





will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: ► **WE PRAISE JESUS.** On what we now call Palm Sunday, crowds in Jerusalem praised Jesus as he passed by on a donkey. They put down palm branches and their coats to honor and praise him. We can honor and praise Jesus this week by following through on our Daily Challenges.

## Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about praising Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God that Jesus is worthy of our praise and asking for help to praise him in the things we say and in the things we do.



**Lyrics** ■■■■

## I Am the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)

**I am the resurrection and the life!  
He who believes in me will live,  
Even though he dies.**

*(Repeat.)*

**There's no! other way to the Father.  
No! other way to the Son.  
No! other way to Jesus.  
We must believe, we must believe,  
We must believe in him alone!**

**I am the resurrection and the life!  
He who believes in me will live,  
Even though he dies.**

*(Repeat.)*

**I am the resurrection and the life!  
I am the resurrection and the life!**

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





## Lyrics

# Jesus Loves Me Rock

Jesus loves me; *(echo)*

This I know, *(echo)*

For the Bible *(echo)*

Tells me so. *(echo)*

Little children *(echo)*

To him belong. *(echo)*

They are weak, but *(echo)*

He's so strong! *(echo)*

Jaaaayyy! *(J)*

Eeeeeeee! *(E)*

Ssssssss! *(S)*

Uuuuuu! *(U)*

Ssssssss! *(S)*

And what's that spell?

Jesus!

And who do you love?

Jesus!

And who loves you?

Jesus!

Who died for you?

Jesus!

And who's your guy?

Jesus!

The apple of your eye!

Jesus!

And who's your friend?

Jesus!

He'll love ya to the end!

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**OK**  
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