



EASTER DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

FOR FAMILIES

THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY

by Shelly Harris, Content Editor, Explore the Bible: Kids

Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem. As He came to the Mount of Olives outside of a town called Bethany, He gave a very special task to two of His disciples. Jesus told them to go into the village and find a young donkey that had never been ridden. The disciples were to untie the donkey and bring it back to Jesus. He told the men that if anyone asked what they were doing, they should say that the Lord needs it.

The disciples did what Jesus told them to and found the donkey. While they were untying the donkey, the donkey's owners asked what they were doing. The disciples answered as Jesus had told them and said that the Lord needed it. Then the disciples laid their robes on the donkey for Jesus to sit on. As Jesus rode along the road, many people spread out their robes on the road in front of Him. Other people spread leafy branches cut from trees. They were honoring Jesus the same way they would honor a king. They joyfully praised God. They shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd were upset by what was happening. They told Jesus to tell His followers to stop shouting. Jesus replied, "Even if they stopped shouting, the stones would cry out!"

— based on Luke 19:28-40; Mark 11:1-10

The Point:

GOD WANTS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP HIM.

Devotional:

PRAISE
HIM

The crowd praised Jesus. They were so excited! One day they would understand more about who Jesus was and the mission He was given. On this day, they praised what they did know about Him: He was a miracle worker. He brought the dead to life. He was the promised Messiah. They praised Him for what they did understand, and that praise was good.

We don't always understand everything about who Jesus is and the work He is doing in our lives. In those moments, we can praise Jesus for what we do understand about Him. What can you praise Jesus for today?

God,

We praise You for what we do understand about who You are,
and we praise You for being greater than we can fully understand. Amen.

JESUS WASHED THE DISCIPLES' FEET

by Carol Tomlinson, Content Editor, Vacation Bible School

It was just before the Passover meal. Jesus knew that it was almost time for Him to leave this world and be reunited with God His Father. Jesus loved His disciples and wanted to show them how much He loved them. Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot was going to betray Him. He got up from the table and tied a towel around His waist. He poured water into a bowl and began to wash His disciples' feet and then dry them with the towel wrapped around His waist. Simon Peter didn't want Jesus to wash his feet. Jesus said that if He didn't wash his feet, Peter would have no part with Him. Peter asked that his hands and head also be washed! Jesus told Peter that someone who has bathed doesn't need to wash anything except his feet.

Jesus knew who would betray Him and told Peter that he was clean, but not all of the disciples were clean. When He finished, He asked the disciples if they knew what He had done for them. He told them that He did that for them, and they should follow His example.

— based on John 13:1-17

The Point:

PEOPLE CAN OBEY JESUS AS A RESPONSE TO HIS LOVE.

Devotional:

ARE YOU A SERVANT?

What does the word servant mean to you? Does it make you think of someone who is lower than you, or someone who has to do everything you command? Do you immediately think of Jesus when you hear it?

A servant is someone who serves others with love and humility. Jesus was a servant. He did not consider Himself better than others. He wanted to show His disciples He loved them by washing their feet. He wanted to give His disciples (and us) a clear example of serving others.

Who can you serve today? Is there someone from school, church, in your community, or in your family that you can serve? It doesn't have to be something big or expensive or in person - a note or a smile can brighten someone's day. Make it a point to follow Jesus' example and serve others with love today.

Dear God,

Thank You for sending Your Son Jesus to be the ultimate Servant.
Thank You for the example He set. Help me to serve others with humility and love. Amen.

THE LAST SUPPER

by Allie Seale, LifeWay Kids Camps & Events Team, CentriKid Camps

In those days, the Jewish people gathered for feasts such as the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Passover. People gathered together to remember how God had rescued His people out of Egypt. On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Jesus told the disciples to go into the city and tell a certain man that Jesus wanted to celebrate Passover at his home with the disciples.

When evening came, Jesus was sitting at the table with the disciples. Jesus said that one of the disciples would betray Him. He was talking about Judas Iscariot. While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, and broke it. He gave it to His disciples and said, "Take this and eat it; this is My body." In the same way, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to His disciples. Then He said, "Drink from it, all of you." He told the disciples that His blood would be shed for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Jesus would be arrested and sentenced to be crucified. Jesus had done nothing wrong, but He died so that the Old Testament Scripture might be fulfilled.

— based on Matthew 26:17-30

The Point:

JESUS IS THE MESSIAH AND SAVIOR.

Devotional:

ULTIMATE
HERO

Have you ever known someone that you really looked up to? Maybe he was great at basketball? Maybe your hero is your mom or dad? Heroes come in all shapes, sizes, and ages. Did you know that there is only one hero that will never fail you? Jesus. He's the ultimate Hero, because He's God. He's the only One that can save you from your sins.

Christ died on the cross as a sacrifice for us. He came to Earth willingly because He wanted to save His people. God planned from the beginning of time to send His only Son to be the Savior and to die for sinful people. How beautiful is it that our God loves us that much?

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for always keeping Your promises. Thank You for delivering us from death by sending Your Son. I love You and praise You for Your goodness. Amen.

JESUS PRAYED IN THE GARDEN

by Kayla Stevens, Content Editor, Discipleship Team

Jesus and His disciples celebrated the special feast called the Passover. After the Passover feast, the disciples went out to a garden with Jesus. Jesus said that each of them would leave Him. Peter promised that he would never leave, but Jesus said, “Before you hear the rooster crow, you will deny me three times!”

Jesus prayed in the garden, but His disciples kept falling asleep. Soon, Judas arrived with soldiers who arrested Jesus! Jesus was taken to unfair trials. He was beaten and mocked.

— based on Matthew 26:36-51

The Point:

JESUS PRAYED TO GOD.

Devotional:

After Passover, Jesus went to a garden to talk with God. He knew what was about to happen. Jesus knew He was going to suffer and die on the cross for our sin. Before going to the cross, Jesus spent time talking with God the Father and preparing for what came next. Jesus trusted God’s plan and obeyed His will.

Where do you go when things feel hard or scary? Where do you look when you need answers to things you don’t understand? Jesus teaches us that God wants us to look to Him. When we pray, we can be honest with God. We can tell God what scares us or worries us. We can confess and repent from our sin. We can ask for His help. God wants us to spend time in prayer with Him, trusting Him no matter what.

TRUSTING
HIS
PLAN

Father,

Thank You that we can spend time with You in prayer. Please help us to trust Your plans and to obey You in all things. Thank You for loving us. Amen.

PETER DENIED JESUS

by Alli Quattlebaum, Graphic Designer, Bible Studies for Life: Kids

Two disciples followed Jesus as the soldiers took Him to the high priest. One disciple knew the high priest and went inside. He spoke to a servant who allowed Peter inside the courtyard. The servant girl asked if Peter was one of Jesus' disciples. Peter lied. He said, "No, I'm not."

Peter joined the other people standing around a fire. They asked him, "Aren't you one of this man's disciples?" Peter lied again, saying, "I am not!" One man who had seen Peter in the garden when Jesus was arrested asked, "Didn't I see you in the garden with Jesus?" As soon as Peter denied knowing Jesus a third time, the rooster crowed.

Later, after Jesus had been crucified and raised from the dead, Jesus met with Peter. Jesus showed Peter that He still loved him.

— based on John 18:15-18, 25-27; 21:15-17

The Point:

GOD WILL FORGIVE ME IF I ASK HIM.

Devotional:

IMPOSSIBLE
LOVE

Think of the last time a friend said or did something hurtful to you. Even remembering a moment like that can bring back sad feelings. It's hard to show love to those who have hurt us, even if they didn't mean to do it.

Sometimes when I think of how I've denied knowing Jesus in my life, I feel like He couldn't possibly love me. The Bible tells us that just like Jesus loved and forgave Peter, He loves and forgives us, too! Even when we make mistakes or disobey, Jesus is there to forgive us, calling us to repent and turn back to Him, and covering our sin with His impossible love.

Dear God,

Thank You for Your forgiveness. Thank You for Your love for me that covers all my sin. You are a great God, and You are bigger than my mistakes. Help me to follow Your truth.
Amen.

JESUS' TRIAL AND DEATH

by Lisa Jennette, Administrative Assistant, Kids Ministry Publishing

While Jesus and the disciples were praying in the garden, Judas arrived with an armed crowd, who arrested Jesus. They took Jesus to Caiaphas, the high priest and to Pilate, the Roman governor. The crowd wanted Jesus to be crucified. Pilate's soldiers mocked Jesus by putting a robe on Him, a crown made of thorns on His head, and a reed in His hand. They spit on Him, beat Him, and led Him to Golgotha, where they crucified Him.

It became dark as night in the middle of the day. Jesus cried out to God, "Why have You forsaken Me?" Jesus cried out again; then, He died.

— based on Matthew 26:47-50; 27:1-45

The Point:

JESUS DIED TO PAY THE PENALTY FOR MY SINS.

Devotional:

Think about how much your parents love you. What if one day you accidentally broke something expensive in a store and had to pay for it? You probably would not be able to. Out of their responsibility and great love for you, your parents would choose to make that payment on your behalf, even though it was your fault.

This is similar to Jesus choosing to die on the cross for us. He knew He would suffer and still He paid the price for our sins. He loves us more than our parents ever could. Jesus is God the Son. He is the only One who could ever save us from our sins. Jesus wanted us to be completely forgiven.

OUT OF
LOVE

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for giving Your life for me on the cross. Thank You for loving me that much.
Amen.

JESUS' BURIAL

by Andrea Pace, Production Editor, Explore the Bible: Kids

Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Joseph took the body and placed it in a new tomb. He rolled a large rock in front. The chief priests asked Pilate to put guards at the tomb.

— based on Matthew 27:57-66

The Point:

JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD

Devotional:

GOD IS WITH
YOU

A few years ago I had to move away from my best friends. Moving away from my friends made me feel sad and lonely. After Jesus died, Jesus' friends were very sad. They probably thought they would never see Him again.

But we know from the Bible that Jesus did not stay in the tomb. He rose from the dead! Jesus' friends didn't have to be sad anymore, because He was with them. God raised Him from the dead.

When I felt sad and lonely, God was with me. He brought me new friends. God will always be there for you, too.

Dear God,

Thank You for sending Jesus to die for our sins. Thank You for bringing Him to life again. Help me to remember that when I am sad, You are always with me. Amen.

JESUS IS ALIVE!

by Isaac Kierstead, Graphic Designer, LifeWay Kids Vacation Bible School

After the Sabbath, early in the morning, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and another Mary went to view the tomb where Jesus had been buried. Suddenly, a strong earthquake shook because an angel came down from heaven. The angel rolled back the heavy stone from the entrance of the tomb. The angel, who looked like lightning and was wearing a robe of purest white, sat on the stone. The guards standing at the tomb were so afraid that they were like dead men and could not even move! The angel told the women not to be afraid. He knew they were looking for Jesus. The angel told them the best news ever. He said that Jesus was alive, just as He had promised. The angel told the women to go quickly to the disciples to tell them the good news. "Tell them Jesus has been raised from the dead!"

The women left quickly and joyfully. They ran to tell the disciples the good news that Jesus was alive. Suddenly, Jesus met the women and said, "Good morning!" The women ran to Him, took hold of His feet, and worshiped Him! Then Jesus told them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee. They will see Me there!"

— based on Matthew 28:1-10

The Point:

JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND IS ALIVE.

Devotional:

THE BEST
SURPRISE

Do you like surprises? One year for my birthday, my parents left me at my grandparent's house to mow their lawn. I was disappointed and thought they had forgotten my birthday! When I went back home, there was a surprise party waiting for me. My parents had a plan the entire time to give me an amazing birthday.

When the women arrived at the tomb, they were surprised to find it empty. God had a plan the entire time for Jesus to defeat death so that we can forever have a relationship with Him.

Dear God,

Thank You so much for sending Your Son to save us from our sin by dying on the cross and rising again. In Your name we pray, Amen.



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING: JESUS



YOUNGER PRESCHOOLERS	MIDDLE PRESCHOOLERS	OLDER PRESCHOOLERS	YOUNGER KIDS	MIDDLE KIDS	PRETEENS
Jesus was born.	God sent Jesus to earth.	God sent Jesus to earth as a real person.	God sent Jesus to earth in human form.	Jesus was born of a virgin.	Jesus was born of a virgin.
God chose a family for Jesus.	Angels told Mary and Joseph that Jesus would be born.	People in the Old Testament told that Jesus would be born.	Prophets in the Old Testament told that Jesus would be the Savior. Jesus is the Messiah who fulfilled Old Testament prophecies.	God planned for Jesus to be the Savior from the beginning of time.	God planned for Jesus to be the Savior from the beginning of time and sent Jesus to earth at the perfect time.
Jesus grew like me.	Jesus grew like me and had a family.	Jesus grew, learned, and had friends.	Jesus understands what it is like to be human.	Jesus is fully God and fully man.	Jesus is God in human form.
Jesus learned about God.	Jesus learned about God by reading the Scriptures.	Jesus prayed to God.	Jesus worshiped God.	Jesus taught that worship is focused on God.	Jesus taught that worship is for God's glory.
Jesus told people about God.	Jesus taught people what God is like.	Jesus taught people what God is like.	Jesus taught through His life what God is like.	Jesus taught about faith, trust, and obedience to God.	Jesus taught that He is the only way to God.
Jesus helped people because He loved them.	Jesus healed sick people.	Jesus performed miracles.	Jesus restored life.	Jesus performed miracles through the power of God.	Jesus performed miracles because He is God's Son.
Jesus loves me.	Jesus loves people.	Jesus loves people.	Jesus loves people.	People can obey Jesus as a response to His love.	Jesus transformed people through His love.
		Jesus died on the cross and is alive.	Jesus died on the cross and God raised Him from the dead.	Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin.	Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin.
	Jesus is God's Son.	Jesus is God's one and only Son.	Jesus was sent to be my Savior.	Jesus is the Messiah and Savior.	God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.
Jesus did everything God told Him to.	Jesus always obeyed God.	Jesus was tempted to sin but did not.	Jesus was human and resisted temptation.	Jesus was human and resisted temptation.	Jesus is holy and perfect.
Jesus is alive.	Jesus is with God.	Jesus is in heaven with God.	Jesus ascended to heaven but promised He would return one day.	Jesus ascended to heaven but promised He would return one day.	Jesus sits at God's right hand and intercedes for us as our advocate, mediator, and high priest. When Jesus returns, all things will be made new.
			Jesus was with God at creation.	Jesus is eternal.	Jesus has always existed and will always be with God.



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING: CHURCH



YOUNGER PRESCHOOLERS	MIDDLE PRESCHOOLERS	OLDER PRESCHOOLERS	YOUNGER KIDS	MIDDLE KIDS	PRETEENS
<p>People learn about God and Jesus at church.</p>	<p>People learn about God and Jesus at church.</p>	<p>The church is people who gather to learn about God and Jesus.</p>	<p>The church is not a building; it is Christians who gather to worship and serve God.</p>	<p>A church is a group of baptized believers who meet together to worship and serve God.</p>	<p>The church is a fellowship of baptized believers who meet together to worship and serve God. Churches today are part of the movement Jesus and His followers began.</p>
<p>People at church love me.</p>	<p>People at church love each other and teach each other about God and Jesus.</p>	<p>Church helpers teach about God and Jesus.</p>	<p>Church leaders are chosen to teach about God and Jesus.</p>	<p>Churches are set apart people to do certain tasks.</p>	<p>God calls church leaders to train believers to join in God's work.</p>
<p>People at church help me.</p>	<p>People at church help others.</p>	<p>The church provides ways for people to help others.</p>	<p>The church meets the needs of people.</p>	<p>God uses the church to meet the needs of people in the community and around the world.</p>	<p>God uses the church to meet people's needs as an expression of His love.</p>
<p>People at church sing, talk to God, and listen to Bible stories.</p>	<p>People at church worship by singing, talking to God, and listening to Bible stories.</p>	<p>People at church worship by praying, giving, singing, reading the Bible, and learning more about God and Jesus.</p>	<p>God wants people to gather to worship Him.</p>	<p>God wants people to gather to worship Him.</p>	<p>Corporate worship is responding to God.</p>
	<p>People give money at church.</p>	<p>People give money at church to help others learn about God and Jesus.</p>	<p>The money people give at church is called tithes and offerings.</p>	<p>In addition to money, offerings can include time, talents, and possessions.</p>	<p>God wants people to be good stewards of money, time, talents, and possessions.</p>
	<p>Jesus had a special meal with His friends.</p>	<p>The Lord's Supper is a special meal to remember Jesus.</p>	<p>The Lord's Supper is a special event at church. People can remember Jesus when they see the Lord's supper being observed.</p>	<p>The Lord's Supper is a way to remind people about what Jesus did. Christians participate in the Lord's Supper.</p>	<p>The body and blood of Jesus are represented in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a church ordinance.</p>
	<p>The Bible has stories about baptism.</p>	<p>A person is baptized after he or she becomes a Christian.</p>	<p>Baptism shows that people have trusted in Jesus as Savior.</p>	<p>Baptism by immersion shows that people have trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord.</p>	<p>Baptism by immersion is a symbol of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism is a church ordinance.</p>

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING: SALVATION

YOUNGER PRESCHOOLERS	MIDDLE PRESCHOOLERS	OLDER PRESCHOOLERS	YOUNGER KIDS	MIDDLE KIDS	PRETEENS
God loves us.	God sent Jesus because He loves us.	God sent Jesus to help people because He loves them.	God provided a way for people to become Christians because He loves them.	God provided a plan for salvation because He loves me.	God had a plan for salvation before the beginning of time.
God cares about us.	God sent Jesus because He cares about us.	God sent His only Son, Jesus, because He cares about us.	God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the one and only Savior of the world.	Salvation is the gift of eternal life in heaven with God. Through salvation, God adopts us as His children.	Jesus willingly died to provide salvation. Jesus' death and resurrection make salvation possible.
	People sometimes make wrong choices.	People sometimes choose to disobey God.	Sin is choosing my way instead of God's way.	The punishment for sin is separation from God.	The punishment for sin is eternal death and hell.
			Jesus took the punishment for people's sins.	Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins.	People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death.
			God will forgive me if I ask Him.	God's salvation is a gift that every person needs and can receive.	God's salvation is eternal. Nothing can separate Christians from God's love.
			People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.	When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior.	Jesus performed miracles because He is God's Son.





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