

## Hands-On Easter Lesson

### Welcome Question

“What is your favorite thing about Easter?”

*Have kids place their answers in the Easter basket set out. Question on a card.*

### Introduction

Hi everyone! Happy Easter! This morning I asked, “What is your favorite thing about Easter?” (*Go over answers*) There seems to be a lot of distractions to the true meaning of Easter. Nobody put “going to the good friday service” in the basket. We like all the fun things, and God wants us to enjoy those things. I love Easter egg hunting! I also love Santa at Christmas, but we know that’s not the true meaning of each of those holidays. Sometimes we have to “hunt” for the truth!

Today, we are going to do just that. This lesson is really one big game today. We are going to “hunt” for clues and then put together a timeline of all the events around Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.

### Instructions

This lesson takes some preparation. Provide a large bin with easter grass and plastic eggs. Then hide items in the bin that children must search for. Depending on the amount of teams you have, multiply the items below so each group can collect one of each.

1. Small perfume bottle
2. Palm branches
3. Silver Coin
4. Bread or Cracker
5. Pipe cleaner crown of thorns
6. Cross
7. Nail
8. Dice
9. Sponge
10. Spices in a small bag
11. Rock
12. Gauze

Divide your group into teams and give them the “Easter Week Hunt” sheet and a Bible. Children will read the scripture for clues and dig in the bin to find the matching item. Once every group has found all their items, move on to the recap part of the lesson.

## Timeline Recap/Large Group Lesson

So let's talk about what that week looked like in Jesus' life. The first thing we see is Mary pouring **perfume** on Jesus' feet. (Perfume)

*"Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." John 12: 3 (also in Mark 14, Luke 7)*

This was all Mary had and she used it to anoint Jesus' feet. This is similar to a thing that happened in the Old Testament when Samuel anointed a young boy who would be king of Israel, King David. Which leads us to the next item on our list, the **Palm Branches**. Jesus comes into Jerusalem and instructs his disciples to retrieve a donkey and colt for him.

*6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" Matthew 21:6-9 (also in John 12)*

Jesus came into Jerusalem in a way that was like welcoming a King. Have you ever seen on TV the Queen of England driving through town? People line the streets with british flags, waving them in her honor. These people did the same thing, they were welcoming their King! But that would soon change as one of his very close followers was getting ready to betray him and Jesus knew it. That's when the silver coin comes in: Judas betrays Jesus (**silver coin**).

*14 Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him. Matthew 26: 14-16*

Jesus knew this was going to happen. He knew it all, in fact he even tells his disciples at their Passover meal, or as we call the Last Supper--this is where the **bread/cracker** comes in.

*26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." 27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you I will not drink*

*again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Matthew 26: 26-29 (Mark 14, John 13-14)*

Jesus was telling his disciples that he would soon die on a cross and be raised from the dead. It was soon after this, that Judas did betray Jesus and that led to his arrest and crucifixion. Did Jesus do anything wrong? No! People didn't understand that he was the Prince of Life, the King of heaven and earth who came to rescue them.

*And the soldiers twisted together a **crown of thorns** and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. John 19: 2. He was beaten and had to carry his own **cross**.*

*So they took Jesus, **17** and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. **18** There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. (John 19: 17-18).*

And there they **nailed** him to the cross. While he hung there in so much pain, soldiers played games for his clothes:

***23** When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. John 19: 23*

And as he hung on the Cross he forgave them, he forgave everyone who placed him there.

Now our sponge...before Jesus died on the cross, he was thirsty. The bible says...

***28** After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."*

***29** A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a **sponge** full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. **30** When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

John 19: 28-30

Jesus' friends took his body to bury. (**spices**)

*...they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. John 19:40*

They laid him in a tomb and in front of it rolled a huge **stone**, so no one could come in or out. And his friends thought that was it. Jesus, the true King, was gone. But we know that's not the end of the story. We know that a silly rock can't stop God. Three days later, everything changed.

In John 20, Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb, but something's off...The stone has been rolled away and Jesus' body is gone! All that's left is the **burial cloths** he was wrapped in. She thinks someone has stolen him, but that's not true is it? Angels are even sitting there asking her why she's crying and then Jesus appears to her and guess what, he's not dead!! Jesus is alive! So she runs off to tell the other followers.

Phew! That's a lot to happen in one week. Sometimes I feel like I have a busy week, but nothing like that! Jesus' life changed dramatically that week and so did ours. Because we are sinners and if you remember, that separates us from God. But Jesus died on a cross for you and for me, so that one day we could be forever with God. He did all that, had that terrible, crazy week and ROSE AGAIN for you. For all of us. And all you have to do is choose to follow Him, to hear his call and answer it. If you feel like God is telling you to accept his free gift of forgiveness, talk to a leader, to me, to a pastor or your parents today! Because he did all this for you and loves you so much!

**Close in Prayer**