Hallelujah! He Has Risen!

Scripture: Matthew 28 and Luke 24

Easter should be the most important celebration of the year in addition to your birthday. After all, Easter reminds us of what Jesus did and how He rose. It reminds us that God fulfilled His promises and sent a savior. This lesson should help our kiddos understand God’s plan and help them appreciate the holiday beyond eggs and chocolate bunnies.

Lesson focus: Jesus died to take on our sins; and He is alive.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2TiXMhATPg

Materials Needed: Pieces of cloth; paper plates; paper; cups; present or gift bag

Memory Verse: “He is not here; for He is risen, as He said, Come see the place Where the Lord lay”. Matthew 28:6

Color Activity: Color Sheet

Sunday School Lesson for Easter

Show your kiddo a gift package, or a gift bag with a tag that says, “do not open until Easter.” Ask him/her what they would think about getting a Christmas present that could not be opened until Easter. That seems sort of a lengthy wait! Explain that today we are celebrating the story of Easter. The beautiful thing about Easter is that it is the conclusion of the story that starts at Christmas. With Advent and Christmas, we celebrate how Jesus was born. But what was He born for? Ultimately, to take on our sins and die, so that we wouldn’t have to suffer.
He did nothing wrong but was punished for what we did. With His resurrection, He had victory over sin and Satan.

After Jesus died, a man named Joseph (from a place called Arimathea) put Jesus in His tomb that nobody had ever used. The tombs they used then were cut out of rock, almost like a cave. Before Joseph left, he and some men rolled a large heavy stone in front of the tomb.

Mary and Mary Magdalene had waited a day to see Jesus because they couldn't go on the Sabbath (which was a day of rest). They made spices and oils as a sign of respect to Jesus and went very early Sunday morning to go see Jesus' body.

As they were just about at the tomb, the earth suddenly shook, and an angel came down from heaven. He easily rolled away the stone at the entrance of the tomb and sat on top of it.

The women looked at each other and rubbed their eyes since they couldn't believe what they had seen -- plus it was very early in the morning, and they were still a little sleepy. The angel was so bright -- almost as bright as lightning! His clothes were as white as snow.

There had been guards watching the tomb so no one would steal Jesus' body. When they saw the angel, they fell over and they couldn't move or speak because they were so afraid.

Then the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus who has died. But He isn't here; He has risen just as He said He would! Come and see for yourself, the tomb is empty."

The women were confused. How could this happen? They were sure Jesus had died, and now He was alive? They looked in the tomb and the cloths Jesus had been wrapped in were lying on the ground; the tomb was empty. Then the angel spoke again, "If you want to find Jesus, He's on his way to Galilee."

So, the women hurried away, they were laughing and crying at the same time. They didn't know what to feel; they had been so sad that Jesus was dead and now they were so excited that He was alive! They just knew they had to find Jesus, and they had to tell the disciples the good news.

As they were running down the path, they turned a corner, and there was Jesus. "Greetings," He said. The ladies fell at His feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my disciples to come to Galilee. That is where they will see me."

The disciples came to Galilee, having heard by this time that Jesus was alive. They were sitting around talking about it when Jesus walked into the room and said to them, "Peace be with you."
The disciples immediately stopped talking. Even though they had heard He was alive, they were shocked to see Him standing there with them.

Jesus said to them, "Why do you look at me like you've just seen a ghost? Why don't you believe what you're seeing? Look at the scars in my hands and feet. It is really me! Touch me and see, I am not a ghost but a real person."

The disciple's mouths were open in amazement because they still didn't know what to think. They were so full of joy, and yet it was so impossible. Jesus understood what they were thinking, so He said, "This is what I told you would happen, that everything must happen that has already been written in the Bible."

Jesus had told the disciples when they had the Last Supper together; they took the bread at communion and Jesus said, "this is my body which I have given to you..." but the disciples hadn't understood what it really meant.

Then Jesus told them, "You have seen these things that have happened, so stay in the city and soon I am going to give you what God has promised you: The Holy Spirit.

When we become Christians, Jesus automatically gives us the Holy Spirit to live inside of us. The Holy Spirit makes us know when we have done something wrong. We might feel sick to our stomach, or just get a bad feeling but that is the Holy Spirit reminding us that we are doing something wrong, or that we need to stop and say sorry and ask for forgiveness for what we've done.

Jesus had one more person to see. His name was Thomas, and he was one of the disciples that wasn't there when Jesus met with them. Thomas had also heard that Jesus was alive but would not believe until he saw Jesus with his own eyes.

A week later when Thomas finally saw Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Stop doubting and believe." But Jesus continued, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; but it is more amazing for those who don't see me and believe anyway."

It's really neat, but Jesus was actually talking to us when He said this. If you believe in Him, without seeing Him, He will think you're very special! That is exactly what faith is: believing in God even though you can't see Him.

Close with prayer and thanks to God for sending Jesus to save us. Ask for joy in remaining to be “Easter people” and celebrating the work of Christ, and for courage in sharing God’s great love and gospel message with other people.

Questions to Ask
1. Who told the women that Jesus was alive?
2. What did Jesus show the disciples to prove that it was really him?
   (Hint: His hands and feet).

Family Fun

Discuss as a family what it means to have faith. In the story you learned about Thomas in John 20:24-31. He didn’t believe that Jesus was alive until he saw Jesus hands and feet with his own eyes. God said, “blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believe”. Make a list together of things (or worries) that you can trust God about.

Color Activity
A Real Easter Bunny

Has big ears that are quick to listen (James 1:19)

Is white as snow because Jesus takes all sin away (Isaiah 1:18)

Has big eyes to look carefully and choose what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

Has no voice for complaining or arguing (Phil 2:13)

Is gentle, kind-hearted and forgiving (Ephesians 4:32)

Reveals hidden things to little children (Matthew 11:25)

Has quick feet to go tell others Jesus’ teachings (Matthew 28:18-20)

Cooking Activity
Easter Bonnets

**Ingredients:**
- 1 (18-oz.) pkg. Pillsbury Refrigerated Sugar Cookies (*Alternative Sugar Cookie recipe*)
- 12 purchased lemon or orange mini muffins
- 2 cups vanilla frosting (from two 16-oz. cans)
- Green and red food color

**Directions:**
1. Using slice and bake method, bake and cool 12 cookies as directed on cookie wrapper. Reserve remaining dough for a later use.
2. If necessary, remove papers from muffins. Cut 3/4-inch slice off bottom of each muffin to use for bonnet.
   Reserve muffin tops for snacking. Spread cut side of each muffin bottom with frosting; attach to cookie, frosting side down. Place bonnets on rack set over 15x10x1-inch baking pan.
3. Place 1/2 cup frosting in resealable plastic bag. Add green food color; squeeze bag until well mixed and of desired color.
4. Place remaining frosting in microwave-safe measuring cup with pouring spout. Microwave on HIGH for 30 to 40 seconds or until pourable. DO NOT BOIL. Stir in enough red food color for desired pink color.
5. Pour pink frosting over bonnets in circular motion to cover completely. Reheat frosting as needed to keep it pourable. Let stand 10 minutes or until set.
6. Remove bonnets from rack with small spatula, smoothing edges of frosting. Cut tiny hole in corner of bag with green frosting. Pipe ribbon of frosting for hatband; add bow design. Make dots and flower designs on each hat as desired.