

Matthew 21:1-16

Palm Sunday

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-16

Memory Verse: Matthew 21:5 “...Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey...”

Lesson Focus: We will take a break from Acts today to help the kids get their hearts ready for the Passion week of Jesus Christ. As this is the weekend before resurrection Sunday, we will teach through Matthew’s account of Jesus’s so-called “Triumphal Entry” into Jerusalem which puts Him well on His way to the cross.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Triumphal Entry for 1st & 2nd, Word Search of verse from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Cut your own Palm Branch

Starter Activity: Roll out the Red Carpet

To get our lesson started, have some discussion on what it means to “roll out the red carpet” for someone. Some sample Qs below:

Q: Who has the red carpet rolled out for them? A: Kings/Queens, rich people, stars, etc.
Q: What does the scene look like when that person is walking on the red carpet?
A: People taking pictures, selfies *, cheering, excited to be near that famous person.

Teachers: Consider taking the roll of red runner cloth that we provided you and clear some space to “roll out the red carpet” in your teaching area. * Then pick a few volunteers who want to have their “Red Carpet Moment”. Consider even having a few kids sit on each side of the red carpet to cheer them on as they walk through. Ham it up by introducing them to everybody, pretending to take pictures, and high-fiving them as they complete their strut across the red carpet. Make it fun!

Ask the kids that participated how it felt to have everyone’s attention. For that moment you were the “most important” person in the room!

Now transition into our lesson by letting the kids know that there is a similar “red carpet moment” in the Bible that we are going to read about today.

Q: Who do you think this biblical “red carpet” is for? A: Jesus!

He is the “most important” person in the whole world, yet we are going to see how His “red carpet” moment was quite a bit different than what stars and celebrities today usually experience. Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

Q: What are we celebrating next week? A: Easter, that's right!

Q: Now does anyone know what we call the Sunday before Easter? Palm Sunday!

We are going to take a break from our study of Acts and look at what happened on the Sunday before Jesus's big resurrection Sunday.

Matthew 21:1: Jesus is entering Jerusalem with His disciples for the last time. Jesus has been with His disciples for about three years astonishing everyone with healing, miracles, forgiving people of their sins, teaching and claiming things about Himself no one had ever dared claim before (like that He was God)!

The disciples were expecting Jesus to be this earthly Jewish King who will reign and make them fat and happy, but read **Matthew 20:17-19** to see why they are going to Jerusalem.

WHAT? * Jesus tells them that it is almost time for Him to die (but that He will also rise again)! This being the third time He has told them, they clearly did not understand what He meant. *

Matthew 21:2-3: Jesus picks two disciples for a curious task. I can imagine these two disciples blankly looking at each other thinking this is a little crazy.

Q: Why do you think Jesus often sends His disciples out in groups of two?

A: This is wise for us even today. It is always good to have a buddy when out and about!

In Mark's gospel (**Mark 11:5-6**) it says that some people actually questioned these two disciples. But after they said Jesus needed it, they let them go. * Can you imagine if Jesus "needed" something of yours? Wouldn't it be AWESOME to give it to Him?

Matthew 21:4-5: All of this was predicted and prophesied 450-500 years beforehand!

WHOA! I think we need to pause for a second to understand how amazing that is.

Q: What is a prophet's job? A: God gives them a message which they are to deliver to people. Most of the time, we see prophets warning God's people about their sin * so that they would repent and turn away from it. But other times, like in this case, prophets would tell people what God plans to do in the future. * Let's read v. 5 again.

This prophecy comes from **Zechariah 9:9** where God said that a King was coming.

Q: When you think of Kings, what comes to mind? A: Power, majesty, and splendor!

Q: But how did the prophet describe this King's arrival? A: LOWLY!

Indeed, Jesus came as the King to fulfill this prophecy, but as He told the disciples before, He came not as the earthly King they were expecting, but as a King who will die for the sins of the world.

Matthew 21:6-8: Jesus is now having His “red carpet moment”!

Q: Where do we find “great multitudes” of people now? A: The Super Bowl or concerts where there is excitement in the air. * Well, back on Palm Sunday, there also was excitement because people were anticipating the coming of God’s promised Messiah. *

Matthew 21:9: After honoring Jesus by putting their palm branches and coats on the road before Him, now they honor Him with their words. Just like how at a pro sports game the crowd CHANTS for the home team, the Jewish people of Jesus’s day used this CHANT from **Psalms 118** identifying Him as their “hometown” Messiah King! *Hosanna* means: save us now! (**Teachers:** Consider acting out this scene a little bit on the “red carpet” you may have used earlier. Pick one boy to be Jesus and consider having you or another leader give him a piggy-back ride. Use the palm branches * we provided and grab a few of the kids’ coats or some fabric from the resource room. Then have a few kids be on each side of the carpet to lay palm branches and coats down. As “the donkey” walks out with “Jesus” on its back, have all of the kids chant, “*Hosanna in the highest!*”)

Matthew 21:10-11: This all created such a ruckus that the whole city took notice! Imagine getting out of bed one Sunday morning and as you mosey over to the breakfast table you hear all of this noise outside your house on your street. You look out the window and you see all of these strangers chanting and celebrating as this dude walks through the crowd on a donkey.

Q: Wouldn’t you also wonder and ask who this guy is? Maybe that is what it was like for some of these people.

Matthew 21:12-13: I don’t think anyone was expecting Jesus to do this in the temple! Just like a prophet, He calls out their sin quoting both Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Matthew 21:14-16: Jesus was miraculously healing people. Instead of praising God for the good Jesus was doing, the religious leaders got REALLY jealous.

Q: But did you notice WHO was crying out to Jesus in the temple? Kids just like you!

Key Point: Jesus loves it when kids cry out to Him! The bossy religious leaders wanted them hushed, but Jesus instead hushed the religious leaders.

Q: Who remembers what “*Hosanna*” means? A: Save us now!

This is what Jesus came to do. What no one seemed to understand (even though He had told them many times) was that His death would be the ultimate sacrifice for sins! On this day people shouted “Hosanna”, * but just a few days later people would shout “Crucify Him, Crucify Him”!

The prophecy we read in v. 5 said that the King would come LOWLY. Another prophecy said that He would bear the sins of His people (**Isaiah 53:6**). As they crucified Him a few days later on Good Friday, that is exactly what He did! This was all part of God’s plan!

Just like the kids back then took time to spend with Jesus on Palm Sunday, take a day this week and turn off the screens and read about Jesus’s trek to the cross with your grown-ups. Or tell your grownups after church you’d like to talk about the lesson with them. Or consider inviting a friend to church next week for our Easter weekend celebration!

FIND THE TREASURE

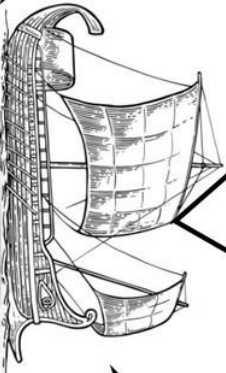


Read Matt. 21:14-16
Who was chanting
"Hosanna" toward
Jesus?

Mediterranean World
Countries or Areas and Islands

PARENT CHALLENGE

What does "Hosanna" mean?



Read Zechariah 9:9
How was this prophecy
fulfilled?