

## April 5 Elementary – Palm Sunday

**Bible Passage:** Jesus' Triumphal Entry / Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

**Story Point:** People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their king.

**Memory Verse:** "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV

**Big Picture Question:** Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from sin.

**Christ Connection:** *During Jesus' triumphal entry, the people welcomed Him as King. Jesus was the Messiah spoken about by the prophet Zechariah: "Look, your King is coming to you; He is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9). One day, Jesus will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything. (Revelation 19:11)*

### **\* BIBLE STUDY TIPS FOR PARENTS:**

The Sunday before Easter is Palm Sunday—the day Jesus entered Jerusalem as the King of kings the week of Passover. Many of God's people traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. Jesus and His disciples traveled to Jerusalem as well. Near Bethphage (BETH fayj) and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead into a village.

Jesus told them, "You will find a young donkey tied there. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'" Jesus would fulfill Zechariah's prophecy: "Look, your King is coming to you ... humble and riding on a donkey" (Zech. 9:9).

Jesus made a spectacular entrance into the city. He rode a donkey, and people laid branches and their robes on the ground in front of Him. The people welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem believed He was the promised Messiah, but they expected Him to overthrow Roman oppression and set up an earthly throne. Jesus sent a different message.

The next day, Jesus entered the temple and turned over the tables of the money changers and those selling doves. Jesus referred to Isaiah 56:7, declaring that His kingship would not just be over the Jews but over all people. While Jesus was in the temple, He healed the blind and the lame. Jesus' actions declared, "I am not just your King; I am also your God." (See Isa. 35:4-6.)

Finally, the priests and the scribes heard the children in the temple worshipping Jesus as their King. "Do You hear what these children are saying?" they asked. Jesus replied, quoting Psalm 8:2. Jesus gladly received their praise because He was worthy of their praise. Jesus is the Son of God who came to overthrow sin and set up an eternal throne.

As you prepare for and celebrate Easter, help kids connect the dots between God's promises of a Messiah and Jesus' coming. Help them understand why Jesus came: to save the world from sin!

## **\*STORY:**

**SAY •** Remember, all the smaller stories in the Bible fit together to tell one big story—the story of how people turned away from God and how He brought us back to Himself by sending His Son, Jesus, to save us from sin.

Today we will hear the story of “Jesus’ Triumphal Entry” because we are celebrating Easter. This Bible story is about what happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem, about a week before His death and resurrection.

Use the Bible storytelling tips below to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video, or both!  
*Option: Call for response: When you talk about the crowd praising God, call for kids to shout together, “Hosanna!”*

### **Jesus’ Triumphal Entry: Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12**

**It was time to celebrate Passover**, a special time to remember how God had freed His people from slavery in Egypt. **Many Jews had traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate** God’s amazing rescue.

**Jesus and His disciples were among the people who traveled to Jerusalem.** When they neared Bethphage (BETH fayj) and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, **Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead into a village. “As soon as you enter the village,” Jesus told them, “you will find a young donkey tied there. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”**

**The disciples did as Jesus asked.** As they untied the donkey, its owners asked why. “The Lord needs it,” they said. Then **they brought the donkey to Jesus, threw their robes onto the donkey, and helped Jesus get onto it. People spread their robes along the road for Jesus, and others spread palm branches cut from the fields. The whole crowd praised God with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen. “Hosanna!” they said. “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”** The word hosanna means “save now.” The people welcomed Jesus as their promised King. They hoped He would save them from the Romans.

**Some religious leaders asked Jesus to tell His disciples to be quiet. Jesus answered, “If they did not praise Me, the rocks would praise Me!”**

**While Jesus was in the temple complex, people who were blind and people who were lame came to Him. Jesus healed them.** The blind and lame would not have been allowed to worship in the temple.

**Other religious leaders saw Jesus’ miracles and heard the children saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” They were very angry and asked Jesus, “Do You hear what these children are saying?”** They were saying Jesus is a king.

**“Yes,” Jesus told them. The writer of the Psalms had said, “You have prepared praise from the mouths of children and nursing infants.”**

**Jesus left them and went to the town of Bethany to spend the night.**

## **CLOSER:**

**SAY** • When Jesus entered the city, were the people happy to see Him? Yes! Can you imagine that parade of people? The Jews were so happy to see Jesus. **People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.**

Did you hear what the people shouted when Jesus entered the city? They shouted, “Hosanna!” The word hosanna means “save now!” The Jews expected Jesus to be their earthly king and free them from the Romans, who were ruling over them. Jesus had come to save the people, but His kingdom is not an earthly kingdom like the people imagined.

Notice that Jesus did not come to save His people by bringing a big army with lots of horses and weapons. Jesus came for a much greater purpose: to save people from sin!

Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. A donkey! That doesn’t seem to me like the type of animal a victorious king would ride. Jesus was fulfilling a prophecy from the Book of Zechariah in the Old Testament. [Open your Bible and read Zechariah 9:9 aloud.]

The people saw Jesus on a donkey and knew that He was showing them that He was the promised King! However, the other reason Jesus rode a donkey instead of some big, brave warhorse is that Jesus wasn’t coming to be the kind of king the people expected. He came humbly, not to save them from their Roman enemies but for a much greater purpose: to save people from sin.

## **\*Christ Connection:**

**Christ Connection:** During Jesus’ triumphal entry, the people welcomed Him as King. Jesus was the Messiah spoken about by the prophet Zechariah: “Look, your King is coming to you; He is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). One day, Jesus will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything. (Revelation 19:11)

**SAY** • Just one week after the people gladly welcomed Jesus, they would mock Him and kill Him on a cross. Jesus the King gave up everything—even His own life—so that everyone who trusts in Him can have forgiveness and eternal life. He is our only hope for salvation! **Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from sin.** On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. One day, He will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything.

## **\*GOSPEL PLAN:**

*(Included in the Activity Pages)*

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

### **\*PRAYER**

**SAY** • Lord God, only You can save. Thank You for coming into the world to rescue us from sin. Help us to live to bring You glory. We love You. Amen.

### **\*KEY PASSAGE / MEMORY VERSE:**

**"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV**

**SAY** • A week after people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King, people called for Him to be crucified. Because Jesus laid down His life and rose again on the third day, He defeated sin and death. There's nothing else for us to fear, because Jesus has defeated the scariest enemies for us! We can trust that God loves us and that he is good.

### **\*DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

#### **COMPREHENSION:**

- Where did Jesus' disciples find the young donkey? (tied up as soon as they entered the village, Matt. 21:2)
- What did people spread on the ground for Jesus to ride over? (coats and palm branches, Mark 11:8)

- What did Jesus say to the religious leaders who wanted Jesus' disciples to be quiet? ("If they were to keep silent, the stones would cry out" Luke 19:40)

### **YOUNGER:**

Open your bible and choose a Triumphal Entry account to read from Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 12.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Why is it important that Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey instead of a powerful warhorse? Guide kids to see that Jesus' riding a donkey fulfilled Old Testament prophecy, and signaled the kind of kingdom Jesus had come to establish. Remind kids that Jesus taught about serving, not being served, and that He lived out His teachings by giving His life for us to live.
- How will Jesus' second coming be different from His first? How will it be the same? Guide kids to find and read Revelation 19:11-16. Discuss how Jesus' first coming brought about the defeat of sin and death, and His second coming will mark the end of all sin everywhere and the complete fixing of the brokenness of the world. Point out that Jesus was King even when he came humbly, but one day He will come as a conquerer.
- How does knowing about Jesus' first and second coming help us live courageously? Help kids see that Jesus has defeated sin, and will one day fix everything broken. We have life in Christ now, and future hope for a perfect eternal life with God forever.

**SAY** • People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King. Jesus defeated sin and death a week later when He died and rose again. One day, Jesus will return as our King and fix everything broken in the world.

### **OLDER:**

Open bibles New Testament. Ask them to name the first four books of the New Testament. (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). Remind kids that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Everything in the Bible is true. God gave us the Gospels so we can know about Jesus, and today's Bible story is found in all four Gospels.

**SAY** • We saw in our Bible story today that people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King. [Point to Jerusalem (H5) on the New Testament Israel Map.]

They celebrated Him! But Jesus was not the type of king the people expected. They hoped for a king who would overthrow the Romans. Later that week, Jesus was arrested and killed. But we know the whole story—Jesus did not stay dead! We will hear more about what happened next time.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Why is it important that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey? Lead kids to conclude that Jesus' fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies was evidence that Jesus was God's Son, the promised Messiah. Discuss how Jesus' entry on a donkey showed His humility. He didn't enter the city on a warhorse, like people might expect a victorious king to do. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 5:17.)
- Have you learned anything about Jesus that surprises you? Guide kids to identify attributes of Jesus that they did not expect from a king. Help them consider the ways in which the kingdom of God is "upside down" from kingdoms of the world. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 18:36.)

- What do you think it will be like when King Jesus returns? Invite kids to share their ideas. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 65:17-19.)

## **\*ACTIVITIES:**

### **CAN YOU FIND THEM ACTIVITY PAGE & COLORING PAGE:**

Invite kids to complete the “Can You Find Them?” activity page and coloring page. Instruct the kids to find the items from the key in the picture.

**SAY** • When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, people were excited. They saw Him as an earthly King, but He is so much more than that! Jesus is the King of everything. He came the first time to die on the cross, but one day He will return to fix everything that is broken in the world.

### **GATHER PALM LEAVES:**

**Supplies:** Palm leave printable (in activity pages)

Print and cut out the palm leaves using the palm leaves printable. Scatter the palm leaves on the floor. Encourage the kids to collect them and put the main point in order. You can print two sets and have your family form two teams.

**SAY** • Jesus and His disciples traveled to the city of Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, people placed their robes and palm branches along the road before Jesus. They shouted out, “Hosanna!” Hosanna means “save now!” People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

### **ROCKS CRY OUT**

**Supplies:** rocks, paint or markers

If it is nice out, head outside and search for a few smooth stones or rocks. It may be helpful to rinse them with water and dry them. Invite your kids to draw or paint faces on the stones. As kids draw on the stones, read Luke 19:37-40. Talk about what the word rebuke means, and ask kids why the Pharisees did not want the disciples to praise Jesus.

**SAY** • People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King, and that made the Pharisees angry. The Pharisees were religious leaders who believed that in order for God to be happy with them, they had to follow all of God’s laws and some other laws they made for themselves, too. They didn’t like Jesus. He taught that no one can keep God’s laws perfectly except for Him and that salvation is based only on trusting in Jesus, not what a person can do for God. Jesus—the only One who has never sinned—died on the cross and rose again so we could be forgiven of our sin when we trust in Him. Who saves us from our sins? Only Jesus saves us from sin.

### **STORYBOARD:**

Provide paper and markers for kids to draw pictures to share the story by making a storyboard. The kids can draw the pictures and include a description of what is happening.

Provide Bible for kids to read and review Matthew 21:1-17.

**SAY** • We heard in our Bible story today how people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King. We can welcome Jesus into our lives as King by turning away from our sin and turning to Him. We can share the good news about Jesus with people wherever we are. God can use us for His glory in our neighborhoods, in cities across the country, and in countries around the world.