



## Lesson: Palm Sunday

This week we pause in our curriculum to observe, understand and reflect on Palm Sunday. The Triumphal Entry is how it's described in our Bible, and Zechariah 9:9 foretells this moment, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." It is unmistakable that Jesus comes as a King for His people. His entry into Jerusalem, though, is one of confrontation. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey shows his meekness and humility. He will not be the conquering hero, but the Suffering Servant. His entry makes Him noticeable as visitors flood the city and cry out "Hosanna!" for their King. But the question remains, what does this King intend to rescue His people from – is it the Roman government or is it sin and death? The answer is discovered next week.

**Scripture:** Matthew 21:1-11

**Story:** *Vos Children's Bible*, Chapter 41 (New Testament section); *Gospel Story Book Bible*, Pages 216-217; *Beginner's Bible*, Pages 464-469.

### Teaching Points:

- God is faithful and never changes. God keeps His promises.
- God is sovereign (or in control).
- Man is sinful.
- God is kind and merciful.
- God is just and holy.
- God saves His people.
- God provides for His people.

### Scripture Memory and Hand Motions for April:

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

- **Have I not commanded you?** (*point emphatically to people in front of you*)
- **Be strong and courageous.** (*flex biceps/arms and/or puff out chest*)
- **Do not** (cross arms making an "x")
- **be frightened and do not be dismayed,** (*use hands to grab opposite arms showing fear*)
- **for the Lord your God** (*point upwards with both hands*)
- **is with you** (*point to one another*)
- **Wherever you go** (*walk in place*).

## Story

### Introduction

Children, do you have a hero or heroine? Who are they (allow kids to determine if it is a real or imaginary character)? What would you do if they came to your school? Or your house? Or your neighborhood? (Allow time to answer) Our story this week tells of the Great Hero – Jesus – and what it was like when he came to the city of Jerusalem. Let's find out what people did when Jesus comes to the city.

## **Crowded Jerusalem**

There were people everywhere. People and more people. About two million people were in or around the city of Jerusalem. Two million people is a lot of people, you know! It was Passover, a special celebration. People came to the city of Jerusalem to celebrate a special dinner and to worship God. Jesus was going to Jerusalem too. But He wasn't going there to celebrate Passover. Jesus was going to Jerusalem to die. It was almost time for Him to die on the cross. Jesus knew that. Jesus would die so that people could be forgiven for their sins and live with God forever. It was God's plan so Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem one last time.

## **A Donkey and Her Colt**

Jesus had just left the small town of Bethany. He said to two of his disciples, "Go to the village over there (point) called Bethphage and you will find a donkey. The donkey is tied up. It's a mother donkey. Her little donkey is with her. Untie the mother donkey and the little colt and bring them here to me." (You call a little donkey a colt. It was little, but not a baby donkey.) The little colt was big enough that somebody could ride him. But nobody ever had. Then Jesus said to the two disciples, "If anyone says anything to you about taking the donkeys, just say, 'The Lord needs them.' Then the person will let you take them." The disciples went to Bethphage and did just what Jesus had asked them to do. Sure enough, as soon as they got there they found the donkeys tied at someone's doorway. The disciples began to untie the donkeys to take them to Jesus. Some people were standing there and asked the disciples, "What are you doing, untying those donkeys?" The disciples answered just as Jesus had told them, "The Lord needs them." And the Bible says the people let the disciples untie those donkeys and take them. It happened just like Jesus said it would!

The disciples brought the donkey and its colt back to Jesus. Then the Bible says the disciples took off their coats, called an outer garment, and laid it on the little colt's back. Their coats were like a saddle for someone to sit on! The disciples knew Jesus was going to ride on that little donkey. They wanted it to be nice and soft for Him. Sure enough, Jesus got on the little donkey and started to ride to Jerusalem. You know, it's really a miracle that the little donkey let Jesus ride on him. Donkeys and horses need to be trained before they carry anything heavy like a person. The Bible says nobody had ever ridden that young donkey before. But it didn't kick or buck or make loud noises. That donkey just carried Jesus into Jerusalem. Jesus had power over that donkey. Jesus has power over everything!

## **Coats**

Some people had followed Jesus from Bethany. Those people started doing the same thing the disciples had done. They took off their coats too, but they didn't put their coats on the donkey. Oh no, instead the people spread their coats on the path, on the road where the donkey carrying Jesus would walk.

## **Branches**

Other people were there too. They did something else. They cut branches from trees and laid them all over the road. There were branches and coats all over that road. It must have looked like a carpet of palm branches and coats!

## **Hosanna**

Jesus was sitting on the donkey slowly riding into Jerusalem. People were all around him. There was a crowd of people walking behind Jesus and a crowd of people walking in front of Jesus. There were people everywhere.

The people started to shout with loud voices,

"Hosanna to the Son of David;  
Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord;  
Hosanna in the highest"

Hosanna means "save now". When they shouted those words, they were praising Jesus.

## **The King**

The people were treating Jesus like He was the King. They were showing him honor when they laid their coats and palm branches on the road. They wanted Jesus to act like the king. In their hearts the people wanted Jesus to set up a great kingdom right then. But no! That wasn't God's plan. Not then. Jesus didn't have a crown on his head. He wasn't riding on a great white horse, like a stallion or anything like that. But still He is the King. He has always been the King. He will always be the King. The Bible says He's the King of Kings. That means He's much greater than any other king! Today we celebrate Palm Sunday. It's a special day. It's the day we remember King Jesus. It's the day King Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Next Sunday, though, we learn that Jesus does something kings do not do. Jesus shows us how much He loves His people and what He'll do to defeat their enemies.

## **Questions for Review**

Have the kids answer "Yes" if it is true, or "no" with the correct answer if it is false.

- No one was in Jerusalem when Jesus arrived. (No! The city was filled with people for the Passover.)
- The two disciples brought an elephant to Jesus. (No! They brought a donkey or colt.)
- The people took off their coats and placed them on the ground as Jesus came into the city. (Yes)
- The people cut branches off trees, placed them on the ground and waved them as Jesus came into the city. (Yes)
- The Bible tells us Jesus is the King of Kings. (Yes)
- Hosanna means save now. (Yes)
- The people wanted Jesus to set up a kingdom right then and save them from their enemies. (Yes)
- God's plan for Jesus was to build a kingdom right then and there. (No! God had a different plan for Jesus.)
- God always keeps His promises. (Yes)
- God always loves us. (Yes)
- God will never leave us. (Yes)