

Family Activity for Sunday, April 5, 2020
Palm Sunday / The Sunday of the Passion

Jesus' Triumphal Entry
Adapted from a lesson written by Beth Steward

Theme: Jesus is our Savior and King

Scripture: John 12:12-50

Lesson Opening: Hangman

Play a round of hangman with puzzle spelling out: "Jesus is our Savior and King."

Once the kids guess the phrase **explain** that today we'll hear the story of Jesus riding into the city of Jerusalem for the last time before he was crucified. We'll hear about how the people greeted him as he came into the city and why they were so excited to see him.

Tell the Story

Ask: I want you to think about a person that you would be *most* excited to see right now. Who would be the person that you would just be so happy to see walk through the door right now? (*Allow for answers.*)

Ask: Now, everyone think of their special person and imagine how you would react if you saw them right now. What would you do? (*Jump up and down, scream, wave your arms in the air...you could even have them act it out*)

Ask: What would you do if a king walked in right now? Would you be excited? I sure would be!

Say: In our story today we are going to hear about how excited people were when they saw a king walking along the road to the city of Jerusalem. Does anyone want to guess what king we might be talking about? (answer: *Jesus!*)

Say: That's right! The people were so excited about Jesus! Jesus is our Savior and King! We'll hear more about it in just a minute. This story is in the Bible, in both Luke and John. In the gospels we read about the life of Jesus while he lived on earth.

Say: Before we hear the story let's practice saying our main point: Jesus is our Savior and King!

Tell the Story: Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem right before the Passover celebration. Passover was the holiday for the Jews where they celebrated all that God had done when he brought them out of Egypt. Many people came to Jerusalem to the temple for Passover, so the roads were crowded with people. When Jesus and his disciples got to the town named Bethany, Jesus told his two of his disciples to go into the town and bring him a young donkey that was tied up in a certain place.

He said, “If anyone asks you why you are untying the colt tell them, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Sure enough, when the disciples were untying the colt a man asked them what they were doing. When they explained that the Lord needed the colt, the man left them alone. They brought the colt to Jesus and laid their cloaks on its back to make a saddle. Then Jesus rode the rest of the way to Jerusalem on the colt. This was to fulfill a prophecy made by Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

Ask: Does anyone know what a prophecy is? (*Allow answers*)

Say: A prophecy is kind of like a prediction. There were many prophecies made about Jesus hundreds of years before he came to earth. This shows that God had a plan to send his Son to us long before it happened.

Tell the Story: Well, as Jesus was riding up the road to Jerusalem, a lot of people started to recognize him. Some of them knew him from when he raised Lazarus from the dead. Others had heard of his great miracles of healing the sick. Everyone was glad to see him. They were so glad that they started laying their coats in the road for him to ride on as he passed. Some of them even began waving palm branches. Listen to what the Bible tells us they said to Jesus as he passed:

Read Enthusiastically: When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:37-39)

Tell the Story: Everyone was glad to see Jesus! Well, almost everyone. The Pharisees were also there watching Jesus ride by but they weren’t glad to see him at all. You see they were mad that Jesus was getting so much attention. They were the religious leaders of the day so they thought *they* deserved all the attention and praise! They even said to Jesus, “Teacher, tell your followers to be quiet!” But Jesus said to them, “I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

Ask: Why do you think Jesus said that? (*Because he knew that he was worthy of the people’s praise. Even though the Pharisees didn’t understand who he was, all of history had been leading up to the time when the Messiah (Jesus) would come to redeem God’s children and all of creation.*)

Tell the Story: When Jesus neared Jerusalem, the Bible says he wept.

Ask: What does it mean to weep? Why do you think Jesus was weeping?

Tell: Jesus was weeping because the people, even though they were praising him, didn’t really understand who he was. They thought Jesus was coming to Jerusalem as king. Jesus is a King, but the people were expecting an earthly king, one who would rule the people instead of Rome. But Jesus is our heavenly King who has come to save us from our sins. Jesus wept because he wished the people understood this.

Main Point: Jesus is our Savior and King!

Ask: Did anyone learn anything new about this story that they hadn't heard before?
(Allow answers.)

Say: Every story in the Bible points to God's love for his people. We can learn something about him on every page of his Word! Another thing we learn is that when we experience God's goodness and grace we must respond in some way.

Ask: Let's talk about some ways that hearing this story might change our lives this week. What are some ways that we can respond to God's love?

1. *Thank God for sending Jesus to die for our sins.*

The people in the story were excited to see Jesus. They waved palm branches and cheered for him, but they didn't really understand who he was. We have a clearer picture of why Jesus came to earth, because we know that he came to die for our sins. We can respond with praise and thanksgiving for what Jesus has done for us!

2. *Share the good news of the gospel with a friend today.*

Good news is meant to be shared. If you are excited about what Jesus has done in your life, think about who you could share that special news with this week.

Say: We are going to pray now, but before we do let's remind ourselves of our main point today!

Main Point: Jesus is our Savior and King!

Pray *Dear God thank you so much for sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins so that we may be forgiven. Thank you for allowing us to hear the story of Palm Sunday today, and help us to respond to your love by giving you thanks everyday and telling others about you. Amen.*