

6. Palm Sunday (Mark 11:1-11)

Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! (Mark 11:9)



PLAN

Supplies

Deep Blue Resources: Large Group
Small Group Kit: CD-ROM | Leader Guide |
Adventure DVD

Additional Deep Blue Resources:

CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible | Deep Blue
Bible Storybook | Deep Blue Kids Bible
Dictionary

Basic Supplies: CD player | DVD
player | Television or projector and
screen | Offering basket | Pencils |
Scissors | Construction paper | Glue |
Staplers | Washable green paint |
Plates | Paper towels | Wet wipes |
Table coverings | Paper | Paintbrush

Gather: Bell

Explore: Green crepe paper
streamers

Respond: Small bowl of water

Before You Teach

Today's Bible story is a familiar one—the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which we celebrate each year on Palm Sunday. Although we associate palm branches with this story, not all of the Gospel accounts mention palm branches. Mark's account says the people spread "branches cut from the fields" on the road. Regardless of whether it actually involved palm branches, it is clear that Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was a time of celebration. The people were in need of a new leader—a savior—and they looked to Jesus to fill that role.

Mark's account of this story begins with Jesus sending two of his disciples into a town to borrow a colt. This instruction seems strange to our modern sensibilities. However, at the time of Roman rule, it was not uncommon for Roman soldiers to requisition animal and human labor. The thing that distinguished Jesus' borrowing of the colt from the requisitioning the Roman soldiers did was his promise to return it. Even in the borrowing of the donkey, Jesus set himself up as a different kind of leader.

The celebration that occurred when Jesus entered Jerusalem was similar to the reception of military leaders returning victorious from battle. It is probable that some in the crowd expected Jesus to be a military ruler who would free them from the Roman emperor. Because we know the rest of the story, we are aware that Jesus is the leader of a very different kind of kingdom. Jesus came as a peaceful leader to teach people to love and serve one another.

Just as the crowd celebrated Jesus on that day long ago, we continue to celebrate Jesus today. As you teach this lesson, let today be a celebration. Jesus came to give us new life. He is our leader. Hosanna in the highest!

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GATHER

Note

The following activities are planned to introduce today's theme. Depending on your setting, you may set up the gathering activities as centers and let the children choose, OR you may select one or more of the activities for all the children to participate in. You may also choose to use one or more of the activities during the Small Group Time at the end of the lesson.

Greeting

- Play the theme song, "All Are Welcome" (CD-ROM), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings.

SAY: Today our Bible story is about Jesus entering Jerusalem.

Holy Week Paper Chain (Logical Activity)

Before class: Photocopy "Holy Week Paper Chain" (Leader Guide—p. 65) for each child. Cut construction paper into 1½-by-9 strips, eight strips for each child.

SAY: Today is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. You are going to make a paper chain to take home and use with your family this week.

- Give each child a copy of "Holy Week Paper Chain" and have each child cut the strips apart.
- Let each child choose eight construction paper strips and glue one word strip on each construction paper strip.
- Have each child find the Palm Sunday strip, overlap the ends of the strip to form a circle with the writing on the inside, and staple it together.
- Encourage each child to insert the paper strip for Monday through the first circle and form another loop, again with the writing on the inside, stapling the second circle so that the loops are joined together.
- Have each child continue adding paper strips to the chain, in order of the days of the week, until all the strips have been added.

SAY: When you take your paper chain home today, hang it up somewhere with the Easter Sunday loop at the top. Take off the bottom loop because today is Palm Sunday. Follow the instructions on the paper strip. Each day this week, remove one more loop and follow the instructions on the paper strip. As your paper chain grows shorter, you will know it is getting closer to Easter.

Lenten Review (Review Activity)

Before class: Photocopy "Lenten Review" (Leader Guide—p. 66) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of "Lenten Review" and a pencil. Encourage each child to find the words listed in the word search.

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GATHER

Follow Directions (Movement Activity)

Before class: Recruit two adult volunteers to help you with this game. Explain the game and their role to your adult volunteers prior to class.

- Have one of your volunteers stand with you at the front of the room. Have the other volunteer stand behind the children.

SAY: Today we are going to play a simple game. I am going to give you some instructions, and all you have to do is follow them.

- Begin giving instructions to the children. After you have given a few simple instructions, have your volunteers begin to give random instructions that are different than yours. At first, have them speak in a normal voice and give one or two instructions, gradually increasing in volume and speed until they are both giving louder and faster instructions than you are.
- Sample instructions: Stand up. Jump up and down. Stop jumping. Stomp your feet. Clap your hands. Turn around in a circle. Touch your toes. Reach for the sky. Wave at your neighbor. March in place. Clap your hands. Turn around in a circle. Stomp your feet. Sit down.

ASK: What made it challenging to follow my instructions?

SAY: In today's Bible story, Jesus gives instructions to some of the disciples.

OR

Handprint Palm Branch (Art Activity)

Before class: Protect the work surface with plastic table coverings or newspaper. Pour a small amount of green paint on a plate for each child. Use a paintbrush to spread the paint into a thin layer on each plate.

SAY: Today is Palm Sunday. You are going to make a palm branch painting using handprints.

- Have each child follow these directions to create a painted palm branch:
 - Place a piece of paper so the short sides of the paper are at the top and bottom.
 - Press one hand in the green paint on a plate.
 - Spreading your fingers, press the painted hand on the piece of paper. Imagine a line down the center of your paper. Place the base of your hand on the line with the fingers reaching toward the sides of the page.
 - Continue to make handprints to fill out your palm branch.
 - Use paper towels and wet wipes to wipe the paint from your hand.

Transition to Explore—Sacred Conversations

- Ring a bell to indicate to the children that it is Large Group Time, and have the children move to the large group area.

ASK: What is your favorite way to celebrate?

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EXPLORE

See the Bible Story

- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure for Session 6 (Adventure DVD) with the children.

ASK: How does your church celebrate Palm Sunday?

Hear the Bible Story

SAY: Today's story is from the Gospel of Mark.

- Read the children Mark 11:1-11 from the *CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible*.
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Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Photocopy "Palm Sunday" (Leader Guide—p. 64) for each child. Cut a length of green crepe paper streamer for each child.

TIP: *If you have access to palm branches, you may let the children wave palm branches in place of streamers.*

- Give each child a streamer.

SAY: Hold your streamers still in your lap. As the story is read, listen for the word *Hosanna*. When you hear the word, hold your streamers in the air and begin waving them back and forth. Continue waving them until the story is finished.

- Read the Bible story from "Palm Sunday."

SAY: When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, people shouted and celebrated him. They were celebrating Jesus as a leader sent from God.

- Keep the streamers to be used during Praising Time.
-

Sign the Bible Verse

SAY: It is a new month, and we have a new Bible verse. This month's Bible verse is from today's story.

- Show the Bible verse (Graphic 6a—CD-ROM).
- Encourage the children to read the verse together with you.
- Show the children the signs for the Bible verse from American Sign Language (Graphic 6b—CD-ROM).

TIP: *Look on the Deep Blue Kids website under the Free Stuff tab to see a video with the signs demonstrated.*

- Invite the children to sign and say the Bible verse with you several times.

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EXPLORE

Praising Time

SAY: It is a new month, and we have a new song.

- Play the song, "Part of the Story" (CD-ROM). Let the children dance as the music plays.
- Give each child a green streamer.

SAY: Today we are celebrating Jesus. Let's review the stories we heard about Jesus last month and today. After I tell you about each story, wave your streamer and say, "Hosanna! Hosanna!"

- Read the following statements, pausing to let the children respond after each one:
 - Jesus taught us about how God wants us to live. Jesus told us to be peacemakers.
 - Mary honored Jesus by anointing his feet with expensive perfume. We honor Jesus by following his teachings.
 - Jesus washed his disciples' feet. Jesus taught that we are to serve others.
 - Jesus asked his followers to remember him. We remember Jesus.
 - When Jesus was feeling sad and anxious, he prayed. We can pray to God anytime.

PRAY: God, thank you for the time of Lent. Help us to always honor Jesus and remember the things he taught us about you. Amen.

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

SAY: This is the last week of Lent.

ASK: How long is Lent? (*forty days, not counting Sundays*) When did Lent begin? (*on Ash Wednesday*)

SAY: The last week of Lent is special. It is known as Holy Week.

ASK: What day are we celebrating today? (*Palm Sunday*) What day will we celebrate next Sunday? (*Easter*)

SAY: Today we remember and celebrate Jesus riding into Jerusalem as the people shouted, "Hosanna!" Next week we will celebrate that Jesus is alive. Not all of the stories of Holy Week are joyful. During this week, we remember Jesus' arrest and death on a cross. It's OK to feel sad when we remember these stories, but we know the rest of the story. Jesus is alive!

Transition to Respond

SAY: When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the people shouted, "Hosanna in the highest!" We are going to march in place as we say these words four times. We will begin quietly and increase the volume each time we say the phrase.

- Encourage the children to follow your directions.
- Dismiss the children to their small groups.

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RESPOND

Younger Elementary Small Group

Reflect and Connect

SAY: Today is Palm Sunday. Today we remember the time Jesus rode on a donkey into Jerusalem. People celebrated Jesus as he rode into the city.

ASK: How did the people celebrate Jesus? *(by waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna!")*

SAY: Let's use our imaginations to think about how we might celebrate Jesus if he arrived in our city.

ASK: How would you greet Jesus? Do you think he would be riding into our city on a donkey or would he arrive some other way? What would you shout? Would you wave anything?

- Invite the children to use their imaginations and share their ideas.

SAY: We might not have the opportunity to celebrate Jesus riding into our town, but we can celebrate Jesus by following his teachings.

ASK: What has Jesus taught us?

Blessing

Before class: Fill a small bowl with water.

- Have the children sit in a circle.

SAY: Each week during our Small Group Time, you will receive a blessing. Blessings help remind us we are important and loved by God. Today when I give you a blessing, I will use water to touch your forehead or the back of your hand. When it is your turn to receive a blessing, hold up your hand if you want the water on your hand or hold your hands in your lap if you want the water on your forehead.

- Bless each child by dipping your finger in the bowl of water and then placing your finger on the child's forehead or hand.

SAY: *(Child's name)*, God will never stop loving you.

At Home with God

SAY: When you go home today, tell your family about Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

- Send a copy of "Palm Sunday" home with each child.

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RESPOND

Older Elementary Small Group

Reflect and Connect

SAY: Today is Palm Sunday.

ASK: What are we celebrating today? (*Jesus' triumphant ride into Jerusalem*)

SAY: When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, the people celebrated him. They waved branches and shouted, "Hosanna!" The people were celebrating that Jesus was their leader. Let's think about leaders.

ASK: What do leaders do? What are characteristics of a good leader? What made Jesus a good leader?

- Invite the children to offer their ideas.

SAY: At the time Jesus lived, it was common for military leaders of the Roman Empire to have parades celebrating their might. These leaders would ride into the city on a powerful horse and demand that people respect and celebrate them. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, the people were reminded of these parades. They celebrated that Jesus was a new leader. Some people expected Jesus to be a military leader and overthrow the Roman Empire. These people were disappointed to discover that Jesus was a different kind of leader. Jesus is a peaceful leader who came to show us how to live and taught us to love each other.

Blessing

Before class: Fill a small bowl with water.

- Have the children sit in a circle.

SAY: Each week during our Small Group Time, you will receive a blessing. Blessings help remind us we are important and loved by God. Today when I give you a blessing, I will use water to touch your forehead or the back of your hand. When it is your turn to receive a blessing, hold up your hand if you want the water on your hand or hold your hands in your lap if you want the water on your forehead.

- Bless each child by dipping your finger in the bowl of water and then placing your finger on the child's forehead or hand.

SAY: (*Child's name*), God will never stop loving you.

At Home with God

SAY: When you go home today, tell your family about Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

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Bible Story



As Jesus and his followers were approaching Jerusalem, Jesus gave two disciples a task.

Jesus sent the two disciples into a nearby village, instructing them to untie the donkey colt they would find and bring it back to him.

Jesus told the disciples that if anyone asked them why they were taking the donkey, to tell them Jesus needed it and would return it soon.

The disciples went and found the donkey colt tied up as Jesus had said.

The disciples brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks upon the donkey's back, and Jesus sat on it.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, many people spread their cloaks on the road and some spread branches they had cut from the field.

All around Jesus, people were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

(Based on Mark 11:1-11.)

At Home with God

DO THIS WITH YOUR FAMILY AT HOME: JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK

This is the last week of Lent. Palm Sunday is the beginning of a special time known as Holy Week.

During Holy Week, we remember the events that led to Jesus' death and resurrection. Some of the events we remember during Holy Week may make us sad. That's OK, because we remember that at the end of Holy Week, on Easter, we will celebrate that Jesus is alive!

Use the paper chain you made today to journey through Holy Week with your family. Each day, starting today, take off a loop of the chain. Do the activities together.

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Holy Week Paper Chain



**Palm Sunday: Today we celebrate Jesus riding into Jerusalem.
Tell your family the story.**

**Monday: Jesus taught us to love one another. Tell someone
you love them.**

**Tuesday: Jesus helped many people. How have you
been helpful today?**

**Wednesday: Invite each member of your family to tell a story they
remember about Jesus.**

**Maundy Thursday: Today we remember Jesus celebrating
Passover with his disciples and washing their feet. Eat a meal
with your family today.**

**Good Friday: Today we remember Jesus' crucifixion. Invite each
member of your family to share what they do when they
are feeling sad.**

**Holy Saturday: Draw a picture of a cross and decorate it
with colors that fit your mood today.**

Easter Sunday: Jesus is alive! Celebrate with your family today.

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Lenten Review



Lent is a time to remember the ministry and teachings of Jesus. Review the stories we have heard during Lent by finding the following words in the grid. Words may be hidden forward, backward, diagonally, and up or down.

Awake
Beatitudes
Bread
Colt
Covenant
Cup
Disciples
Feet
Garden

Hosanna
Lent
Mary
Palm Sunday (two words)
Peace
Pray
Serve
Sleep
Wash

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          T T
        Z S O V
      P E L Y H A
    R V Z A L K T E
  A F K D D B E B C P
Y B W N O N E A E A S I
Y N H U F J F W K L E H B Y
C L S S Y N T S A M D P O R A Z
K M V V U E U G W Z U Y S S E D F T
L A L T D Q S L A D T Q E A A A R L M Y
C O V E N A N T P I Q R C Z N D F G X E
Y R A M A A E T I V W O J N E V R Q
L Y Y J L A D E C A L H A A I Z
C W P E U T R W S T G N B V
S B U H N T A H I F A U
J P C E P H G R D H
L F L E H L E Y
I H E Q U C
Y L S G
S F
  
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