

LESSON 30

# Triumphal Entry

JOHN 12:10-50



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**BIBLE TRUTH**

THE PEOPLE CELEBRATE THEIR KING WHILE OTHERS PLOT HIS DEATH

**LESSON SNAPSHOT**

**1. OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN**

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

**2. BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN**

Read John 12:10–50 from the Scriptures or read story 108, “Triumphal Entry” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

**3. OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 20 MIN**

**Insults and Palm Branches**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ green construction paper
- ✓ white copy paper
- ✓ Jesus costume—flat sheet, rope for belt, sandals
- ✓ scissors
- ✓ red markers or crayons

**4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION**

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

**5. OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Exposing the Fear of Man**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ paper and pencils for the class

**6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

**7. ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Drawing Palm Branches**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

**8. CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

**9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Looking Back at the Prophet**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ Bibles for the class

**TOTAL 75 MIN**

## PREPARING TO TEACH

## TEACHING POINTS

**The crowd celebrates Jesus as an earthly king**—With Passover near, the crowds were streaming into Jerusalem for the annual feast. Word had spread that Jesus was the Messiah. Those who had witnessed Jesus’ latest miracles went out to meet him as he made his way into Jerusalem. The people shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Psalm 118:26). This was in keeping with the prophecy of Zechariah, who said, “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” (Zechariah 9:9). The people celebrated Jesus’ arrival, convinced he would become the earthly king over Israel. The disciples were just as confused about Jesus’ mission. At one point the mother of James and John had asked if her sons could sit alongside Jesus, believing he would one day come to earthly power. The disciples, like the people around them, thought Jesus would be a political Messiah. They would be surprised as much as anyone by his arrest.

**Jesus points the disciples back to the cross**—In all of the excitement, Jesus did not lose sight of his mission. He knew the cross was before him when he said, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” (John 12:23). Jesus knew the people were looking for an earthly king. Yet, while the crowd celebrated him, the religious rulers were plotting his death (John 12:10), as they had been for some time now (John 5:18; 7:19, 25; 8:40). Matthew records their scheme: “Then the chief priests and the elders...plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, ‘Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people’” (Matthew 26:3–5).

The cross was not easy for Jesus, and he brings the disciples into his struggle. He tells them “Now is my soul troubled” (John 12:27), and indicates he will die on the cross when he says, “I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself” (John 12:32). Jesus would not be lifted up onto an earthly throne. Jesus would be lifted up onto a wooden cross.

**The crowd did not believe**—In spite of all that Jesus did, the Jews still did not believe. Who could blame them? Apart from God’s opening their eyes to the cross, there is no way that they could understand. Even when the voice of God the Father rang out from heaven, they did not believe. Those who may have understood that Jesus was referring to his crucifixion dismissed the idea and were confused saying, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up?” (John 12:34). Jesus knew

that when he was arrested even his disciples would flee. He knew that when these same crowds saw Jesus tortured and mocked, they would quickly turn against him.

## A LITTLE BIT MORE

### *Fear of Man*

John 12:42 tells us that some of the authorities themselves believed in Jesus but did not confess it because they were afraid of what the Pharisees would do. In Proverbs 29:25 we read, “The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe.” A person fears man when his behavior is guided by what other people say or think instead of what God says in his Word. For example, God tells us to worship expressively by raising our hands and shouting, but sometimes we don’t do that because we are afraid of what others will say. Another example is that God tells us to share the gospel with others, but sometimes we are afraid to share the gospel out of fear of what others will think. The opposite of the fear of man is the fear of the Lord. Proverbs 9:10 tells us that the “fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom”—the wise person follows the Word of the Lord.

## Where Is the Gospel? \_\_\_\_\_

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Even as Jesus was riding into Jerusalem, the very people who were celebrating his arrival would put him to death in a few days, Jesus would soon die for the sins of men by suffering on the cross. It is true that Jesus came to earth to be king. But he came as a heavenly king for a spiritual kingdom. That is why he said that if the people did not praise him, the very stones would cry out. The cross did not come as a surprise to Jesus (John 12:27); it was the very reason he had come to earth. Jesus even predicted how he would die (John 12:32–33). Many of those who hailed Jesus as king in his triumphal entry would soon cry out with the religious rulers, “Crucify him!”

THE LESSON

**OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN**

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

**BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN**

Read John 12:10–50 from the Scriptures or read story 108, “Triumphal Entry” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

**OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 20 MIN**

**Insults and Palm Branches**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ green construction paper
- ✓ white copy paper
- ✓ Jesus costume—flat sheet, rope for belt, sandals
- ✓ scissors
- ✓ red markers or crayons

This exercise is designed to show the real contrast present on Palm Sunday.

Read the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry all the way through to the end of John 12 where it talks about the unbelief of the Jews.

Explain to the children that while some of the Jews celebrated the arrival of Jesus, others reacted with unbelief and would soon kill him. We can think of Palm Sunday and the waving of palm branches as a happy day. Jesus, on the other hand, knew he was going to the cross. He was well aware of the unbelief in the hearts of the people. He knew that the religious rulers were plotting to take his life.

Have the class cut out palm branches from the green paper. Then have them write the words “I don’t believe” in large red letters on the white paper. While they are doing this, dress up in the Jesus costume.

Tell the class that you are going to reenact Jesus coming into Jerusalem. Have them line up as though they were lining a road on both sides and wave their palm branches. Then turn and tell them (acting as Jesus) that you are not an earthly king and that you will soon die on the cross. Then instruct the children to wave their papers that say “I don’t believe” while calling out “Crucify him.”

Have the children sit down, and then ask them following questions:

- What did it feel like to both welcome Jesus with palms and then shout “Crucify him”?  
*(Accept any answer.)*
- How is this view of the triumphal entry different from what you are used to?  
*(Draw out the children here.)*
- How did you feel when I asked you to wave your white papers and shout “Crucify him”?  
*(Draw out the children.)*
- Where do you stand today? How do you live your life? Do you live for Jesus or yourself?  
*(Let these questions hang but don’t force answers.)*

## TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

### OBJECT LESON 2 ..... 10 MIN

#### Exposing the Fear of Man

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ paper and pencils for the class

Read John 12:37–50 and talk about the fear of man. Ask the class what is meant by the phrase “the fear of man.” Then ask them to write a paragraph explaining where they are most likely to fear the opinions of others.

In a final step of courage, ask for a show of hands of those willing to share their weaknesses with the class. Then ask the others why they are not comfortable sharing. You just might be able to uncover some fear of man.

Follow through with having the students share and talk about how common the fear of man is in our lives.

**SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Drawing Palm Branches**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Draw a picture of the people waving palm branches and write the words “Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel” like a banner across the paper.

**CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s Scripture passages.

**BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Looking Back at the Prophet**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ Bibles for the class

Take time as a class to look back at what the prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 6:9–10 that John connected to Jesus in John 12:40. Then go on to read John 12:41 to the class and ask them what they think is interesting about what John said regarding Isaiah. (Help the class to see how amazing it was that Isaiah, who lived hundreds of years prior, saw the glory of Jesus!) The real connection is not that Isaiah saw Jesus, but that he saw the glory of God in the coming

deliverer. John talks about the glory of Jesus (John 1:14; 2:11). For John, if you see the glory of God, you are seeing the glory of Jesus because Jesus *is* God.

Questions for reflection:

- **Who does this verse from Isaiah refer to in this story about Jesus?**  
*(Isaiah is describing those who do not believe in Jesus.)*
  
- **Who might these verses apply to today?**  
*(Before God touches our hearts and opens our eyes to believe we are all like the Pharisees. We are all born with sin. Many who are brought up in Christian homes grow up to reject Jesus much like the Jews did [John 12:37].)*