

## TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: JOHN 12:12-50



*The people celebrate their King while others plot His death*

## The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

### Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

**The crowd celebrates Jesus as King** – The crowds assembled for the Passover. Those who saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead went out to meet Jesus when they heard that He was on His way into Jerusalem. The people shouted a phrase from Psalm 118:26, saying, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” This was in keeping with the prophecy of Zechariah, who said, “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples still had no clue of all that was unfolding before their eyes. They, like the people around them, thought Jesus would be a political Messiah. They would be surprised as much as anyone by His arrest.

**The Pharisees jealously watched and waited for a time to kill Jesus.** John records several references to the religious rulers wanting to kill Jesus (John 5:18, 7:19, 7:25, 8:40). They even plotted to kill Lazarus because they viewed him as the reason why so many people were flocking to Jesus (John 12:10). Matthew records their scheme: “They plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him, ‘But not during the Feast,’ they said, ‘or there may be a riot among the people.’” The crowds believed Jesus would usher in the kingdom. His entrance into Jerusalem at the time of Passover (one of the busiest times of the year) only made for more commotion.

**Jesus is rejected by His own people** – In spite of all that Jesus did, Luke records that the Jews still did not believe. Though some did believe, it is safe to assume that more doubted than believed. Once Jesus was arrested, and the crowds saw their hopeful ruler tortured and mocked, they turned against Him.

Some of the rules, who did believe Jesus’ words, were afraid to say they believed. In a similar way we can be afraid to share our faith.

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### WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

*Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.*

Even as Jesus was riding into Jerusalem, He was aware that the very people who were celebrating His arrival would, in a few days, put Him to death.

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 cry out, the very stones would cry out.

Jesus then predicted His death and announced that the time had come. Some of the very same people, who moments prior hailed Jesus as King in his triumphal entry, would cry out with the religious rulers, "Crucify him!"

### ON THE ROAD TO EMMANUS

**Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.**

**Bible Passage: Isaiah 6:9,10**

#### **Connecting the passage to Christ:**

John quotes these words of Isaiah and attributes them to Jesus in John 12:41, saying, "Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about Him". What an amazing testimony! 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. 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-- for Jesus is God.

#### **Questions for reflection:**

- Who does this verse speak about? (This verse speaks about those who do not believe in Jesus.)
- Who might these verses apply to? (The Pharisees and many of the Jews refused to believe in Jesus and rejected Him. [see John 12:37].)

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### SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

#### BE A DOER OF THE WORD

*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.*

### ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

*Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?*

#### I WAS THERE

##### Supplies

Jewish man costume

Retell the story of the triumphal entry from the perspective of a Jewish man who was there. He was waving palm branches, but he could hear the plotting of the Pharisees behind him. Have him also talk about the raising of Lazarus prior to the triumphal entry. Let him show both amazement at the miracle and his disappointment that Jesus was not the delivering King they had all hoped for. Finally, have him talk about the tragedy of the crucifixion and the rejoicing at the resurrection when he discovered Jesus really was the King and Deliverer after all. Now he understands that Jesus was not going to deliver Israel from the Romans, but, instead, deliver us all from the bondage of sin.

•Afterwards draw the class out regarding how Jesus' death on the cross really did bring victory for all those who would believe.



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### INSULTS AND PALM BRANCHES

**Supplies:**

- green construction paper
- white copy paper
- Jesus costume
- scissors
- red 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.

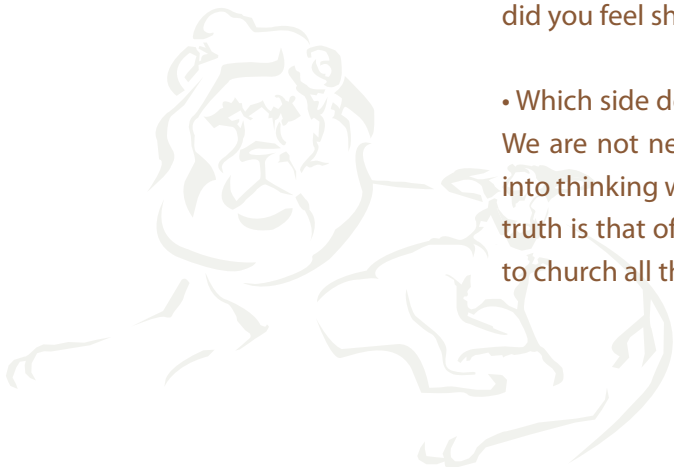
Explain to the children that while some of the Jews celebrated the arrival of Jesus, others looked with unbelief and would soon kill Him. We can think of Palm Sunday and the waving of palm branches as a happy day. Jesus, on the other hand, knew He was going to the cross. He was well aware of the unbelief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

Have half the class cut out palm branches from the green paper and the other half write the word unbelief in large letters and color it in red. While they are doing this, have the person who is playing Jesus get into costume.

Tell the children that the students with the paper should wad it up into a ball. Explain that you are going to reenact Jesus coming into Jerusalem. Have the children line up as though they were lining a road on both sides. Those with palms should wave them with enthusiasm. Those with the wadded paper should throw the paper at Jesus saying, "I don't believe you."

Then close the exercise and ask the following questions of the class.

- How is this view of the triumphal entry different than what you were used to? (Draw out the children here.)
- How did you feel about those who were shouting "I don't believe you?" How did you feel shouting that? (Draw out the children.)
- Which side do you think you would have been on? Why? (We have a choice. We are not necessarily like those who would believe. It is easy to be fooled into thinking we have faith, just because we were born in Christian homes. The truth is that often those who grow up in Christian homes and who have gone to church all their lives, grow up to yell "I don't believe" at Jesus.)



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### FEAR OF MAN SKITS

Do three ad lib skits as follows:

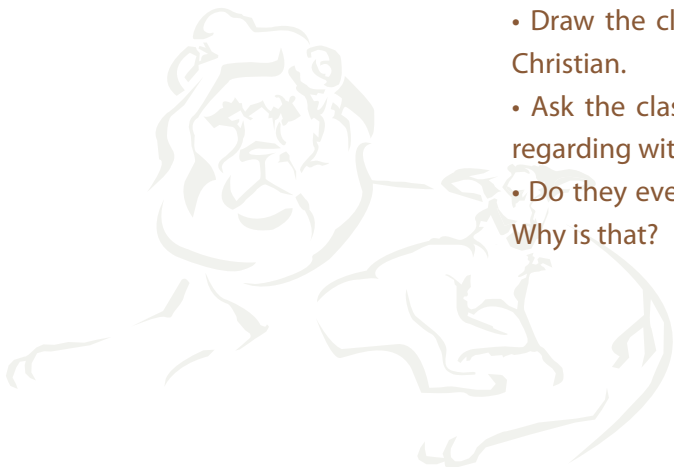
All the skits show two friends meeting. One is a Christian and the other is an unbeliever. All the skits are a replay of the same events, but with different results. All are set on Monday morning.

Skit #1: After a short greeting the unbeliever asks the Christian how his weekend went. The Christian says nothing about church. The unbeliever asks if he saw the football playoff game. The Christian answers yeah, but is lying. The unbeliever asks details about the game, but the Christian doesn't have any answers. Finally, the unbeliever accuses the Christian of lying and then makes fun of him "cause he probably spent his whole Sunday at church."

Skit# 2: Repeat the scenario above, only this time the Christian tells the unbeliever that he didn't see the game. When the unbeliever asks why not, the Christian tells him that he had to go to church. The unbeliever expresses his sympathy and says, "What a drag." The Christian fails to say he really enjoys church and instead says, "Yeah."

Skit #3: Again, repeat the scenario in skit #1, only this time when the unbeliever asks about the game, the Christian tells him that after church he went out to lunch with the youth group where several of the teens were sharing their testimony. The unbeliever asks what a testimony is. The Christian explains and then shares his own. The unbeliever is really affected and asks if he could go to church with him sometime because he just stays home on Sundays. He adds that all he does is watch football and he doesn't really have any friends.

- Draw the class out about the skits and how the fear of man is at work in the Christian.
- Ask the class if they have ever experienced the fear of man. Draw them out regarding witnessing and worship.
- Do they ever feel like it is not cool to come across too spiritual to their friends? Why is that?



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### PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

### IN CLASS PROJECT

#### AN ACTIVITY

**Supplies:**  
pencil and paper

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

### FOR THE OLDER GRADES

#### EXPOSING THE FEAR OF MAN

**Supplies:**  
paper and pencils for the class

Read John 12:37-50 and talk about the fear of man. Draw out the class as to the meaning of the fear of man. Then ask them to write down a paragraph explaining where they are most likely to fear man.

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.

### A LITTLE BIT MORE

**Fear of Man** – Proverbs 29:25 says, "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe." The fear of man is when a person allows what people say or think to guide their behavior instead of allowing what God says in His Word to guide their behavior. God tells us to worship expressively with the raising of hands and with shouts. But sometimes we won't do that because we are afraid of what others will say. God tells us to share the Gospel with others. But sometimes we are afraid to share the Gospel for 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 man follows the word of the Lord.