

Jesus Rides a Donkey Into Jerusalem

Overview



Materials You'll Need

- small empty chip containers, with lids
- popcorn kernels or uncooked beans
- rubber bands
- spoons
- construction paper
- tape
- scissors
- markers



Scriptures

Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11; Lk 19:37-40

Bible Truth Objective(s)

God is great and we should worship and praise Him

Behavioral Objective(s)

To praise God with our actions and words; to be careful of what we say so that we do not offend God

Memory Verse

"Blessed is the King." (Lk 19:38)



Bible Knowledge

The Triumphant Entry

Jesus and His disciples headed towards Jerusalem, where He would make His triumphant entry. They stopped near two small villages called Bethphage and Bethany, where Jesus asked two of the disciples to get a donkey. Bethphage and Bethany were located just east of Jerusalem, within two miles of the city.

By riding on a colt into the city, Jesus fulfilled Zechariah's prophecy that the Messiah would come riding on a donkey (Zech 9:9). As Jesus entered the city, there was a large crowd supporting Him. They chanted praises, took branches of palm trees and even spread their outer garments on the ground to welcome Jesus. By doing so, the people were acknowledging that Jesus was an important person, worthy to be greeted in such an honorable fashion. The multitude that welcomed Jesus was not the people who actually lived in Jerusalem. They were probably the crowd that had been following Jesus from Jericho (Mt 20:29). It is also interesting to note that prior to this event, Jesus

had tried to stay away from the spotlight, and discouraged all fanfare. But by riding into Jerusalem, He was proclaiming Himself to be the Prince of Peace, the King, the Messiah.

"Hosanna" originally meant "save" (see Ps 118:25). The people thought that Jesus had come to establish an earthly kingdom. That is why they were so enthusiastic about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. But what Jesus came to do was to save the people from their sins.

When the disciples shouted, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest," it was essentially a citation of Psalm 118:26, with the word "King" added in. The disciples said this because they realized that Jesus was the promised King sent by God. Even though they seemed to recognize who Jesus was at that moment, they still had a limited understanding of Jesus' real purpose. When Jesus was about to be crucified, many of them scattered. Even Peter, who had stayed behind, denied knowing Jesus. It was not until Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension that the disciples finally understood all the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah had been fulfilled through Jesus.



Understanding Your Students

Kindergartners enjoy learning and using new words, but we need to be sure when we introduce new words that the children know what they mean. A word that will come up repeatedly is “praise.” “Praise” is simply an expression of approval; it’s a commendation. Explain to your students that to praise Jesus means to tell Him how wonderful we think He is.

As you teach today’s lesson on Jesus’ triumphal entry, picture a happy scene with Jesus being worshiped by joyful people waving palm branches and showing Him their love. You can pass this image and attitude on to your students.

Encourage your students to use voices to express

praise. Use rhythmic instruments to accompany voices, and let your students move around. Something you can try is to have the students stand up and at timed intervals (when the Lord is entering Jerusalem during the story telling), have them shout, “Hosanna in the highest.” The students can also clap or shake some bells at the same time. Be sure to practice this with them first so it does not get chaotic during the story telling. This is a great way to involve the students in the story, as well, teach them a way to praise God.

Explain that singing is another way to praise Jesus and to let Him know that we love Him. Let your students suggest other ways of showing Jesus that He is special to them (e.g. getting along with others, being helpful to parents and teachers, obeying parents, helping the needy, etc.).



Vocabulary

Praise

to say something wonderful about another person or thing; when we praise God, we are telling Him how wonderful we think He is

Hosanna

to save; a word of praise

Preach

to tell others about God and His kingdom

Jerusalem

a big and important city in Israel



Before You Teach

When Jesus triumphantly entered Jerusalem, it must have been something to see. The crowd was singing praises, waving palm branches and spreading their clothes onto the ground to welcome Jesus. It must have been like greeting a big celebrity today. Even the disciples praised Jesus with a psalm. This excitement, however, did not last long. Within the week, Jesus was arrested, beaten, and led to be crucified. Why did the crowd turn so quickly, from being supporters to naysayers?

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the people chanted that He was the King. However, their understanding was that Jesus was going to be an earthly king and save them from the control of the Romans. They believed that they had hope of a new life. But this wasn’t the life Jesus had planned for them. Their focus was physical; Jesus’ was spiri-

tual. So of course, their excitement turned into great disappointment when Jesus was taken and sentenced to die. How could they resurrect their own country when their king was captured? But it was for their spiritual life that Jesus was arrested.

Like the people at the time, we often put our dreams on the things of this world. We want to have more money, more clothes, or a better house. These dreams drive us to work harder, and give us a hope for a better life. But when our hopes and dreams rest on the things of the world, we can only be satisfied for a while. Even if we are able to achieve all that we want, all those things are perishable.

Jesus’ purpose for coming into the world was to offer something that would never perish; He wants to give us eternal life. When we set our hopes on the things above, we will be satisfied. We will not be in want. We will learn to be content with what we have and pursue things that please God.



Bible Story

God Loves Us

In the last lesson, we learned about the two most important commandments Jesus gave us. Do you remember what they are? We must love God with all our heart and mind. We must also love our neighbors as ourselves. Jesus wants all of us to love God and the people around us. That is what makes Him happy. What kinds of things can we do to show God that we love Him? (Allow students to share.) What kinds of things can we do to show others that we love them? (Allow students to answer.)

We know that Jesus loves us and takes care of us. We know that He is our Lord and God. That is why we should worship and praise Him. Today, we are going to learn more about Jesus and how the people praised Him.

Jesus Will Ride on a Donkey

Today's story is about Jesus riding down a road on a donkey. Do you know what a donkey looks like? A donkey is an animal. It is like a horse, but it is smaller. In Jesus' time, people often traveled on donkeys if they needed to go far away. Back then, people did not travel the way we do today. Today we use many different things to get from one place to another. What are some of the things we use today to get to places? (Let children answer; e.g. cars, bikes, roller blades, airplanes, etc.) In Jesus' time they did not have any of those things. Most of the time, people just walked. When Jesus was preaching, He walked to most places. Sometimes He used a boat if He was going to another place where he had to cross a sea. Sometimes He used animals such as horses and donkeys. Remember when Mary was going to give birth to Jesus? She rode on a donkey too. Today's story is about Jesus riding on a donkey. Let's find out why He had to ride on a donkey.

Jesus Asks His Disciples to Get a Donkey

Jesus was going to a lot of places preaching and teaching the word of God. This was something He loved to do because He wanted everyone to hear the word of God. One day, Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem with His disciples. They were on their way to a big special dinner that the Jewish people cele-

brated. This dinner was called the Passover.

But instead of walking, Jesus knew that He would have to ride on a donkey. This is because He wanted to show all the people that He was the Savior. He was like a king and He was going to go into the city riding on the donkey to show that He was special and sent by God.

So Jesus called two of His disciples and said, "Go to the little town near the big city of Jerusalem. When you get there, you will find a donkey. Untie it and bring it to me. If anyone asks you what you are doing, say the Lord needs the donkey."

So Jesus' disciples, who loved God very much, obeyed Jesus and went to the little town. They saw a donkey, just as Jesus had said. They started to gently untie the donkey.

Then some people who were standing nearby saw them and asked, "What are you doing, untying that donkey?"

"It is for the Lord," the disciples said. "He needs to ride on it."

When the people heard that, they let the disciples go. So the disciples brought the donkey back to Jesus.

Jesus was happy His helpers had obeyed Him and brought back the donkey. Before Jesus climbed to sit on it, the disciples put some coats on top of the donkey to make it more comfortable. When everything was ready, Jesus climbed onto the donkey. Then He rode the donkey down the road toward Jerusalem.

The People Praise Jesus

The road to Jerusalem was full of people who were going there to celebrate the Passover. There were probably babies, boys and girls, mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, and aunts and uncles. Jesus and His disciples travelled along the road with everyone. Some of the people watched as Jesus went by. Others walked beside Him. As the people heard that Jesus was going to Jerusalem, more and more people came to see what was happening.

"It's Him! It's Jesus!" some of the people shouted as He rode the donkey down the road. How do you think that people knew who Jesus was? (Let the children answer). In some of the other lessons, we talked about how Jesus did many miracles. In one of them, He raised Lazarus from the dead. Many peo-

ple talked about this great miracle. So by now, a lot of people knew who Jesus was. Everyone on the road knew who Jesus was and they were very excited.

The people were so happy to see Jesus that as He travelled on the donkey they began to praise Him. How do you think they praised Jesus? (Let them answer.) They sang and shouted praises. They put their coats and palm branches on the ground for Jesus to ride over. Some even waved the palm branches. At that time, people would put their coats on the ground and wave palm branches to welcome a king into the city. Although Jesus was not a king who sat in a castle, we know that He is the King of peace. He is our King in heaven. So as Jesus rode the donkey the people showed their love for Jesus by spreading their coats and waving palm branches.

It was a great scene. Some people, like the disciples, praised God by shouting, "Hosanna! Praise the Lord!" The word Hosanna means "to save." The disciples knew that Jesus was here to save the people. Others waved their branches in the air. The people were saying that Jesus was their King.

As Jesus got closer to Jerusalem, the people

inside the city heard the singing and shouting.

"What's going on? Who is coming?" they asked.

"It's Him! It's Jesus!" other people replied.

The people in the city were also very happy and excited to hear that Jesus was coming and ran out to see Him. More and more people sang and waved branches in the air as Jesus rode the donkey through the big gate to the city. Everyone was happy that Jesus had come to Jerusalem and they welcomed Him with all their hearts.

We Should Praise Jesus

What kinds of things do we do to praise God today? We can sing hymns, and we can pray. We can also help other people know who God is by being helpful and kind. These are all different ways to praise God. We should praise God because, like the people in the story, we know that God is the greatest. He is our Lord and King. He loves us very much and even died for us to save us. Every day, we should remember to praise God.



Check For Understanding

- 1. Which city was Jesus going to?**
(Jerusalem.)
- 2. How was Jesus going to get into the city of Jerusalem?** (He was going to ride a donkey.)
- 3. What did the people do to praise Jesus as He rode on the donkey?** (They put their coats on the ground for Jesus to ride over, they put palm leaves on the ground, they

waved palm branches, the disciples shouted, "Hosanna".)

- 4. Why did the people do all these things to praise Jesus?** (They thought Jesus was a king, they thought He had come to save them, they wanted to show Him that they loved Him.)
- 5. What can we do to praise Jesus?** (Allow students to share; use our words, sing hymns, pray to God, be careful of what we say because we might hurt God and we will not be praising Him.)



Life Application Story

Praise the Lord

All the children in Mrs. Marsh's kindergarten class got to church early one Saturday. The children were early because they had to prepare for the

Religious Education Day performance. This was a very special day since every class could show the rest of the church the things they learned in class. The kindergartners were going to sing a hymn in front of everyone and they were all very excited.

Mrs. Marsh was already waiting for them when the children got to class. She greeted and smiled at them.

"What day is it today?" Mrs. Marsh asked after prayer. Some of the children raised their hands.

"Yes, John. Can you tell me what day it is?"

"Religious Education Day," John answered.

"Great answer, John. Today, we're going to be singing in front of the grown-ups for Religious Education Day. It is very important. You'll not only be praising God but showing everyone what you have learned," Mrs. Marsh said.

Susie said, "My grandma is coming to hear us today."

Juan said, "My aunt Maria is also coming all the way from the city to hear us sing. She's going to stay with us for a while."

"Well," Mrs. Marsh said, "we have many friends and relatives visiting today. We also have a special visitor in class today. Everyone, please say hello to Nicole."

The children smiled at Nicole.

"Hi Nicole!" They all knew Nicole was Susie's older sister.

"Nicole is here to help us today," Mrs. Marsh said. "So let's sing the hymn through once and remember we need to sing out loud to praise God. Don't forget to smile!"

As they sang, the children clapped their hands and stepped to the tune. They noticed as they sang, though, that Nicole was not singing. But Nicole was making different motions with her hands. The motions changed every time they sang a different word.

After the hymn, Mrs. Marsh said, "You may have noticed that Nicole is not singing. That's because she is using sign language. Some people who are visiting our church today can't hear. But they can use their hands to talk. They use their hands to spell out the words. It's a special language. Nicole is learning sign language at school

because she wants to help people who can't hear."

Juan asked, "Can God understand this language?"

Mrs. Marsh replied, "Yes, Juan. People who can't hear or talk can learn to use sign language to praise God. God will know what they are doing."

The children looked at each other excitedly. This language sounded very special.

John asked, "Can we learn this special language too?"

"Of course!" Mrs. Marsh said. "I'm so glad you asked because that's what Nicole came to do today—to teach us our hymn, but in sign language! That way, we can sing and use sign language in our praises to God!"

"I'm glad Nicole came today," Juan said.

"Me, too," John said.

"I am too," Mrs. Marsh said. "And we're learning different ways to praise God!"

The children worked very hard at learning some of the hand signs. When it was time to perform they sung the hymn twice. The first time they only sang. But the second time they also used some sign language. The children were very happy. The rest of the church was also happy that they had such special young kindergarten students.

Questions to Think About

1. **What were the children going to do for the special day?** (They were going to sing a hymn to praise God.)
2. **Besides singing, what else did the children do to praise God?** (They used sign language.)
3. **What else can we do to praise God?** (Besides just saying or doing good things (give examples), we should also be careful of our words; e.g. we should not say "Oh my God" or "Holy cow" since they don't praise God, or really mean anything.)



Activity 1

Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Ask the students to color in the picture. Have the students cut out the squares and put the puzzle back together.



Activity 2

Using Our Words Wisely

Look at the pictures. Why can't we say, "Oh my God!" and words like stupid? These words don't give praise to God. What can we say instead so that we are using our words wisely.



Activity 3

Praise Instruments

A good way to praise God is through singing. Help the students make the following instrument. Then pick a hymn from the hymn book and use the instrument to help the students praise God.

Materials:

1. *small empty chip containers, with lids*
2. *popcorn kernels or uncooked beans*
3. *rubber bands*
4. *spoons*
5. *construction paper*
6. *tape*
7. *scissors*
8. *markers*

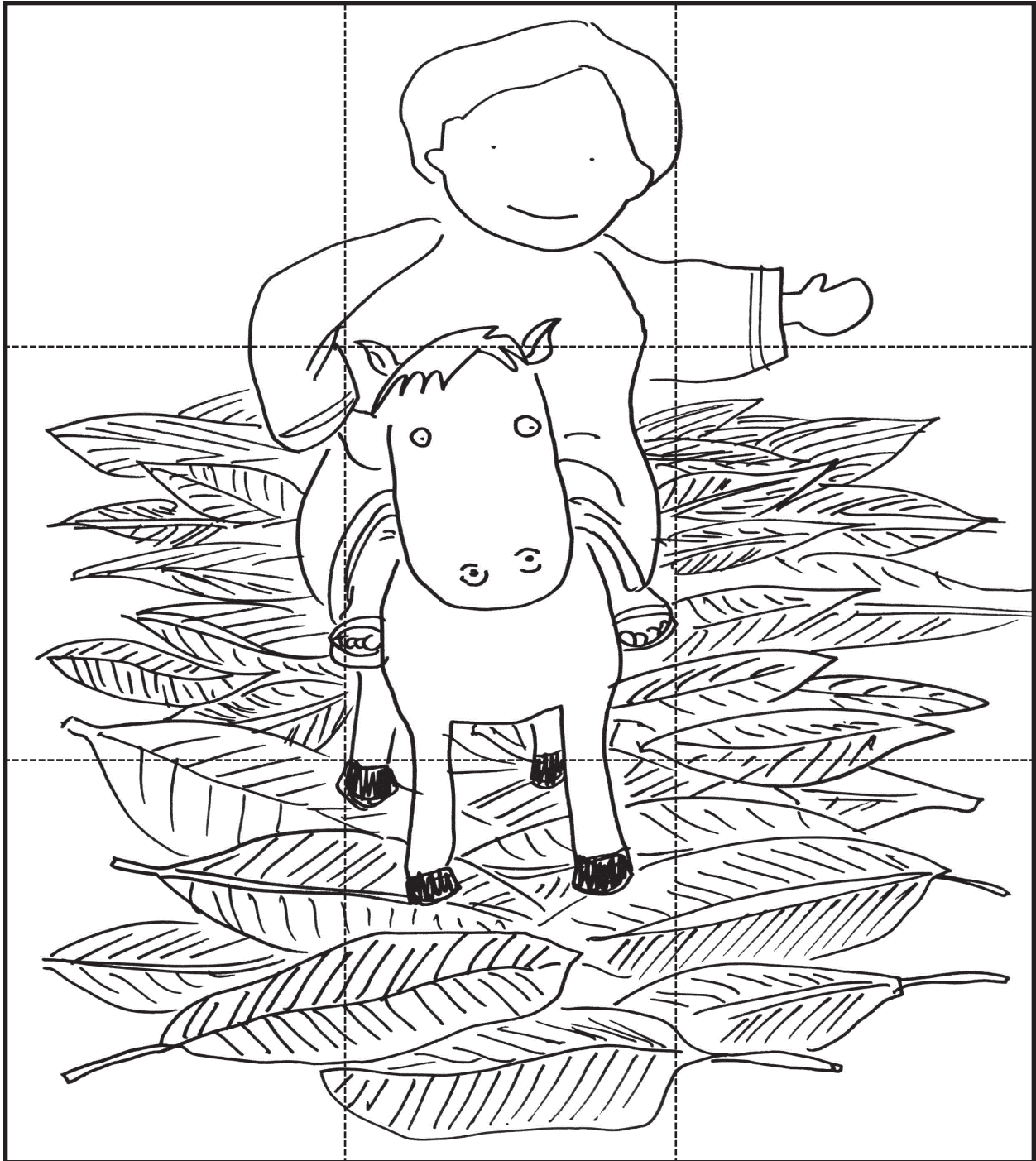
Directions:

1. *Give each student an empty container.*
2. *Help students remove the lid and fill the container partially with the kernels or beans.*
3. *Put the lid back on. (Teacher may wish to seal the lid with tape so the beans do not fall out.)*
4. *Help the students wrap a piece of construction paper around the container (cut to size).*
5. *Tape the ends of the construction paper to the container.*
6. *Have the students decorate their containers by drawing on the paper.*
7. *Place a rubber band around the container.*
8. *Provide some students with a spoon.*
9. *As the students sing, and praise God they can shake their instrument, pluck the rubber band or use the spoon to hit the lid.*
10. *Ask the students how God feels when we praise Him.*

Activity 12:1

Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Ask the students to color in the picture. Have the students cut out the squares and put the puzzle back together.



Activity 12:2

Using Our Words Wisely

Look at the pictures. Why can't we say, "Oh my God!" and words like stupid? These words don't give praise to God. What can we say instead so that we are using our words wisely.



I can say,
"Oh no!"

I can say,
"Oops!"



I can say,
"Look at
what you
did!"

I can say,
"Please be
more careful
next time!"