

date: **4/9/17**

**Bible Passage: Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11;
Luke 19:28–38; John 12:12–19**
(Triumphal Entry/Palm Sunday)

Jesus Is King

REMEMBER VERSE

**Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and
believes him who sent me has eternal life.**

John 5:24a

Inspire

Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives

Recently my daughter and my four-year-old granddaughter were driving through the Texas hill country when my granddaughter yelled out, “Mom, Mom, look! It’s that thing, that thing Jesus rode on and everyone laid their coats down!”

I have to admit, sometimes I forget the reality of Jesus humbling Himself and making His entrance on a donkey. The fact that Jesus is King is not always reflected in my daily life. At times, honoring, serving, and worshipping Jesus get overlooked due to everything else I have going on. And unfortunately, at times I, like the people in Jerusalem, want a completely different kind of king. They wanted Jesus to save them politically, economically, and militarily. I know when things don’t go the way I think they should, I’m disappointed in my King, and there’s a tendency in my heart to call it quits. I want Him to follow my agenda and make things happen in my life the way I want.

It wasn’t long until the cry of the crowds changed from “Hosanna” to “Crucify Him.” I may not be yelling, “Crucify Him,” but do I make time for my King each day? Jesus Christ came to die for my sins. If His salvation of me were a solitary act, it would be more than enough to merit my loyalty, affection, and devotion for all eternity. He has already done enough for me to recognize and honor Him as my King!

Debbie Guinn
Tru Team

Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

The significance of the triumphal entry is magnified by the fact that the story is recorded in all four gospel accounts. Matthew 21:10 tells us, "When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, 'Who is this?'" Jerusalem was quaking with anticipation when Jesus made His entry. The population of the city would most likely have tripled due to those who had come to celebrate Passover. In addition, there were 10 times the usual number of Roman soldiers to guard against any potential uprising from the Zealots. So, it was with soldiers watching, people bustling, and the city almost bursting at the seams that Jesus made His way toward Jerusalem.

Preparing to come down the hillside from the Mount of Olives, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy from Zechariah 9 and sent His disciples to untie a donkey and bring it to Him. The normal pomp and circumstance that would accompany a king entering a city were absent as Jesus approached on a humble donkey with His ragtag disciples following. The tradition of waving palm branches and crying "Hosanna" began 200 years earlier, following the reign of a bloodthirsty Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes. After many years, the Maccabees drove the Assyrian army and Epiphanes from Jerusalem. The people spontaneously celebrated by waving palm branches. From that point forward, the palm branch symbolized deliverance from oppression.

The gospel of Mark tells us that as Jesus entered, "Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (Mark 11:8–9). The Jewish people had hope that Jesus would be the one to overthrow the foreign rule of Rome; but Jesus was coming with an entirely different kingdom in mind.

Support

Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word

Truly, there is no one like Jesus, for no one else would weep compassionately for people who He knew would not only reject Him, but also soon crucify Him. He displays that same compassionate love for us.

This week, take time to consider the conscious or unconscious decisions you make in regard to Jesus being your King. Are there areas of your life where you set limits or hold back from relinquishing your will to His will? Even if it feels a bit uncomfortable, talk with Jesus about the difficulties you experience in this area. Openly share with Him your feelings and listen for what He may have to say.

EXPLORE::: 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Find a Branch!

In today's part of The Big God Story, Jesus enters Jerusalem and is greeted by the people waving palm branches.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Palm Branch template \(see Resources\)](#)
- Card stock (1 sheet per child, green)
- Scissors

PREPARE AHEAD

Print or copy the Palm Branch template onto green card stock and cut out the palm branches. Make sure to have at least one branch per child.

SET UP

Hide the palm branches around the room.

RELATE

Welcome children to EXPLORE, and invite them to begin searching around the room for the hidden palm branches. As children find the branches, collect each one; they will be used later during storytelling. **Who can tell me what these branches are? What part of The Big God Story are they from? Who used them?**

DISCOVER:: 25 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Ponder Point**Jesus Is King****Chloe's Rules**

Host/Worship Leader

SUPPLIES

- [Chloe's Rules videos](#)

RELATE

Welcome children as they're entering the large group meeting area. *Tech: Cue Chloe's Rules video.* The theme song will play as the Worship Leader/Host enters and makes his way up front, welcoming and greeting children along the way. This should be a high-energy entrance. *Tech: Cue preschool program theme song.* Choose and play two upbeat worship songs of your choice from a worship album that complements the theme and focus of the lesson.

Mail Time

Host/Worship Leader

SUPPLIES

- [Mail Time intro clip and image \(see Resources\)](#)
- [Remember Verse image \(see Resources\)](#)

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Mail Time envelope art (see Resources)
- Envelope (large)
- Bibles (your personal and large children's)
- Mailbox

PREPARE AHEAD

Print or copy the Mail Time envelope art and attach to a large envelope. Print or copy one Remember Verse card and put it inside the envelope.

RELATE

Tech: Cue the Mail Time intro clip and image. Choose one volunteer to hide the mail and another to find the mail. Have the "Seeker" close her eyes while the "Hider" finds a good place to hide the Remember Verse. Once the mail has been hidden, the Seeker will begin to look for the mail while children give clues to its whereabouts by calling out "hot" and "cold."

Once the Seeker finds the mail, the Host invites her to pull out the enclosed Remember Verse. Next, the Host should find the Remember Verse in his Bible and read the words aloud. Talk about the meaning of the verse while interacting with children.

Lead children in reciting the Remember Verse several times together using a variety of engaging methods. Hand motions, different voices, various speeds, and character integration are all great ways to help commit the Scripture to memory. For longer verses, approach the verse one section at a time, increasing what the children repeat back each week.

REMEMBER VERSE

Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.

John 5:24a

REMEMBER VERSE DEFINITIONS

Eternal: Lasting forever and ever

REMEMBER VERSE MOTIONS

Very truly I tell you: Nod head in affirmation, cup hands around mouth.

whoever hears my word: cup hands around ears.

and believes him who sent me: Point index fingers to the sky.

has eternal life: Point right index finger outward and make a circular motion.

Wardrobe of Wonder

Storyteller/Host/Worship Leader

SUPPLIES

- What'sIt: Palm Branch (see optional image in Resources)
- Wardrobe of Wonder

What's It: Palm Branch

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people enthusiastically celebrated Him as their king by spreading their cloaks on the road and waving palm branches. The crowd wanted Him to become their king and “save” them by freeing them from Roman rule, supplying them with food, and healing their sick. They would soon find out Jesus wasn’t the kind of king they expected. They didn’t understand the Messiah would become their true Savior through suffering death on the cross.

RELATE

Tech: Cue the Wardrobe of Wonder intro clip and image. Invite a child volunteer to “spy” on the What’s It by peeking into the wardrobe. Each time the wardrobe door opens, *cue the Wardrobe of Wonder sound effect.* Have him whisper the identity of the What’s It in your ear to ensure he knows what it is.

Invite your assistant to sit on the stools with you. Then lead the group in asking the assistant yes-or-no questions about the What’s It. Once the children have guessed correctly, ask your assistant to retrieve the What’s It from the wardrobe and bring it to you. Thank your volunteer and encourage him to sit with his small group.

ASK

Hmm, a palm branch in the wardrobe. Where do palm branches come from? Interact with responses. **Yes, that’s right! Palm branches are from palm trees! What can we do with a palm branch?** Children answer. **Yes, one of the things we can do is wave them in the air. And that’s exactly what some people did when Jesus came to town. It was a way to celebrate someone as king! Friends, do you know what time it is?**

The Big God Story

Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–38; John 12:12–19

Jesus Is King

Storytelling Technique: Props/Reenactment

SUPPLIES

- [The Big God Story intro clip and image \(see Resources\)](#)
- [What’s It: Palm Branch \(see optional image in Resources\)](#)
- [King on a Chariot image \(see Resources\)](#)
- [Jesus on a Donkey image \(see Resources\)](#)
- [Donkey Walking on Road sound effect \(see Resources\)](#)
- Palm branches from EXPLORE (1 per child)

RELATE

Tech: Cue The Big God Story intro clip and image. **Hello, friends! Welcome back! I’m so glad each of you is here to learn more from God’s Word—the Bible. Before we get started today, will you close your eyes and pray with me? Let’s invite God into our time and ask Him to be the one to teach us.** Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

We’re all going to need palm branches for The Big God Story today. Pass out paper palm branches found during EXPLORE to children; ask them not to wave them until given instructions. **As you listen to The Big God Story, you’ll get to wave your palm branches every time you hear the word *King!* Then when I do this (create a signal cuing kids to stop), you’ll stop waving your branches and hold them in your lap. Let’s practice ... ready? “Jesus is *King!*”** Children wave branches. **Great job!**

God made a promise long ago, when Adam and Eve were in the garden, that He would send a Savior. What

happens when God makes a promise? Encourage responses. **He keeps it. That's right! We know that God always keeps His promises, and we can trust Him! Do you remember who the promised Savior is?** Children answer. **That's right ... the promised Savior is Jesus! God made a promise that Jesus would become Savior and King!** Encourage children to wave palm branches.

When Jesus was all grown up, He was getting ready to finish all the plans God had for Him here on earth. He had been teaching and healing, and now He and His disciples were going into the special city of Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover festival, which was a very important celebration that happened once a year. The people of Israel would gather together to feast and to celebrate God's care and protection of His people when they left Egypt long ago.

As Jesus and His disciples traveled to Jerusalem, Jesus did something that some people might have thought was strange. Take out Bible and open to Matthew 21:2–3. He told two of His disciples, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away." We saw a donkey earlier, when you were playing the game!

Let's think about this for a minute ... Jesus told His disciples to go and find a donkey and colt tied up. What's a colt? Invite responses. **A colt is a young donkey. In fact, a colt is not more than four years old. Can you show me four fingers?** Interact with kids counting and holding up four fingers. **Jesus told His disciples to untie the donkey and the colt and bring them to Him. And that's exactly what the disciples did!**

Tech: Cue Donkey sound effect. **The disciples led the donkey and the colt to Jesus. Because they loved Jesus, they laid some of their clothes on the animal's back before Jesus got up on the colt. Do you think this was the way a king (children wave palm branches) would travel? I picture a king (children wave palm branches) riding into town on a shiny chariot with big beautiful horses and armies of soldiers.** *Tech: Cue King on a chariot image.* **In those days, if a king (children wave palm branches) rode into town on a donkey, that meant he was coming in peace!**

As Jesus began riding into town, people recognized Him and began to make a parade for Him. *Tech: Cue Jesus on a donkey image.* **They were praising and cheering because they had heard of all the wonderful things He had done. The people took palm branches from the trees and waved them, shouting, "Hosanna, hosanna!" which means "Save us now!" They wanted Jesus to be their king. Children wave palm branches. They wanted Jesus to save them from the rough people who were ruling over them and their country. The Jewish people wanted Jesus to be their leader and do everything they wanted. But Jesus knew the things they really needed. Jesus knew the people needed a Savior—He knows that we need a Savior. This was all part of God's plan for His Son—to save us from our sin.**

That day when Jesus rode into town, even the children were praising Jesus and following Him. You know what? We can praise Jesus too. We can praise Him because He is the one true God! We can praise Him because He is the promised Savior God said He would send! We can praise Him not just today, but every day, because He is God, and He is worthy of our praise. Jesus is King! Children wave palm branches.

Leader Tip

To make your storytelling even more interactive, consider having children act out motions within sections of the story. For example, when reading that the people waved the palm branches and laid them before Jesus, have children stand and wave their palm branches from side to side over their heads and then lay them down on the ground by bending down. You could also have kids make the sounds of the clip, clap, clop of the donkey hooves by clapping their hands on their laps or clucking their tongues.

RESPOND:: 20 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.

Wonder Questions

Small Group Enhancements, coloring pages, and discussion questions help your group go deeper into today's portion of The Big God Story.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Wonder Questions coloring pages \(see Resources\)](#)
- [TruWonder Small Group Enhancements timeline and images \(see Resources\)](#)
- Crayons

RELATE

Today in The Big God Story, we heard about Jesus riding into Jerusalem and being praised by the people as a king. But He wasn't the type of king the people expected. He wore plain clothes, rode on the back of a donkey, and came to be our Savior forever. Jesus is our King and promised Savior.

I wonder ... What would I have shouted to Jesus to praise Him as He rode by?

I wonder ... Why does Jesus want to be my King?

I wonder ... How can I worship Jesus as my King?

BLESS:: 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Remember Verse cards \(see Resources\)](#)
- [HomeFront Weekly: Lesson 7 \(see Resources\)](#)

RELATE

Close your time with the following call-and-response blessing. Teach children their part ("We praise our King") and have them repeat that after each of your blessings.

Leader: **May you praise the name of Jesus.**

Children: **We praise our King.**

Leader: **May you remember His mighty works.**

Children: **We praise our King.**

Leader: **May you love Him with all your heart.**

Children: **We praise our King.**

Leader: **May you serve the King of kings and praise Him forever and ever.**

Children: **We praise our King.**

When you've finished the call and response, gather children around you for a final blessing:

Children, may you always celebrate Jesus as your King!