



Jesus' Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21:1–11



LESSON GOAL

Students will not only praise Jesus with their lips but will also obey Him with their lives.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Describe the scene in Jerusalem before Jesus' triumphal entry.
- Explain why Jesus rode a colt into Jerusalem.
- List the events of Jesus' entry in chronological order.
- Analyze the significance of what the crowds were shouting.

KEY VERSE

"Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Hosanna in the highest!'" —Matthew 21:9

APPLICATION

- Rejoice that Jesus is the Son of David.
- Obey Jesus as king in every area of your life.
- Be ready to testify to who Jesus is.
- Model Jesus' meekness in your own life.

NEXT WEEK

Matthew 21:33–46

Jesus Confronts the Pharisees

Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

"Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... you shall teach them to your children." —Deuteronomy 11:18–19

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here that will aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Introduction

Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus was His greatest miracle before His death (John 11). While some believed in Jesus when they heard about Lazarus (John 11:45), the Pharisees and chief priests responded to the miracle by plotting to kill Him (John 11:53). As the last Passover of Jesus' life neared, Jerusalem was inundated by Jews who had come to observe the feast. (Over two million Jews may have been in the city.) The city was abuzz with rumors of whether Jesus would come to observe the Passover or not (John 11:55–56). Ever since the priests and Pharisees had agreed to kill Jesus, Jesus "no longer walked openly among the Jews" (John 11:53). The crowds were anxious to see if Jesus would come into the city. The chief priests and Pharisees were also anxious, having given a command "that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him" (John 11:57).

Although Jesus had avoided the chief priests and Pharisees, the time had come for Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem before His death. After starting out, Jesus took the disciples aside and again told them how He was going to be betrayed, condemned, tortured, killed, and resurrected (Matt. 20:17–19). Jesus stopped in Jericho along the way, a city about fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem. In Jericho, He healed Bartimaeus and another blind man (Matt. 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43) and pronounced the salvation of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–10). Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover, probably in time to spend the Sabbath with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. (Bethany was on the east side of the Mount of Olives, only about two miles from Jerusalem.) At dinner, Mary anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair (John 12:1–3). When the news spread to Jerusalem that Jesus was in Bethany, curious Jews traveled there, not only to see Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead (John 12:9).

On the next day, word spread from Bethany to Jerusalem that Jesus was coming to the great city (John 12:12). A great multitude "took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out, 'Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel!'" (John 12:13). The Jewish multitude was eager to accept Jesus as their earthly king. Sadly, the offering of their lips did not reflect the disposition of their hearts. They wanted to be delivered from every oppressor but their own wickedness.

Preparation for Jesus' Entrance (Matt. 21:1–3)

After leaving Bethany to go to Jerusalem, Jesus began to prepare for His entrance into the city. (Perhaps He had heard or seen the crowds coming toward Him from Jerusalem.) Jesus sent two of His disciples into the nearby village of Bethphage to get a colt for Him to ride into the city. Jesus gave them specific instructions: "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a

colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me" (Matt. 21:2). Jesus was aware that the disciples' action could be interpreted as theft, so He told them to respond, "The Lord has need of them," when asked what they were doing (21:3). It is impossible to know if Jesus had made plans with the donkey's owner ahead of time or if He was exercising His omniscience and omnipotence over the situation. The disciples did just what Jesus told them to (21:6). Although Matthew does not mention the details, Mark and Luke reveal that the disciples found the donkeys exactly where Jesus said they would be and responded to the men who asked what they were doing exactly as Jesus had commanded (Mark 11:4–6; Luke 19:32–34).

Prophecy of Jesus' Entrance (Matt. 21:4–5)

When Jesus told the disciples to get the colt, He was intentionally fulfilling Old Testament prophecy and proclaiming Himself to be the promised Messiah. Referring to Jesus' riding of a colt, Matthew says, "All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet" (Matt. 21:4). The Old Testament prophet Zechariah announced to the "daughter of Zion," the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that their king would come (Zech. 9:9). But He would not come like the kings of other nations, riding a war-horse or chariot. Instead, Zechariah prophesied that He would come "sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Matt. 21:5). Zechariah attributes three characteristics to the coming King: He is just; He has salvation; and He is lowly (Zech. 9:9). Of those three, Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is "lowly." Instead of the warrior king Israel wanted to deliver them from Roman bondage, Jesus revealed that He was a humble and meek king who did not come to liberate His people physically but spiritually. Jesus did not come to make war with Rome but to bring men to peace with God.

Praise at Jesus' Entrance (Matt. 21:6–11)

After the two disciples returned with the donkeys, Jesus continued on His way toward Jerusalem. The disciples placed their clothes on the donkey for Jesus to sit on (Matt. 21:7). Although Jesus only sat on the colt, the mother's presence would have been soothing to the untrained donkey. The great crowds showed submission to Jesus by "paving" the roads with their clothes (21:8). They also "cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road" (21:8). John 12:13 reveals that the people had cut off palm branches. During the Feast of Tabernacles, God commanded that the people take palm branches and "rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days" (Lev. 23:40). The palm branches were not part of the Passover feast but they had become a national symbol of rejoicing. Two centuries earlier the Israelites had welcomed the military hero Simon the Maccabee with palm branches. Following the tradition, Jerusalem eagerly welcomed Jesus, hoping He would deliver them from Rome.

The crowd not only laid down their clothes and palm branches but also lifted up their voices. Both the crowds who went before Jesus and those who followed praised God and proclaimed the Messiah (Matt. 21:9; Mark 11:9). Luke 19:37 depicts the "multitude of the disciples" as they began "to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen." Perhaps Lazarus or Bartimaeus were with Jesus as living testimonies of His marvelous power. The people proclaimed, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" (Matt. 21:9). "Hosanna" was a transliteration of the Hebrew phrase "Save us!" Both "Hosanna" and "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" are phrases that come from Psalm 118:25–26. The term Hosanna had become a way to express exaltation and honor. The people's praise of Jesus as the "Son of David" and as the one "who comes in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 21:9) pointed to their belief that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Similarly, the people shouted, "Blessed is the kingdom of our father

David that comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:10) and they praised Jesus as the "The King of Israel!" (John 12:13). The crowds rejoiced that God had sent a king to deliver His people. For a short time, the crowds had placed their faith in Jesus as the only hope for Israel.

As the procession entered Jerusalem, news of Jesus' dramatic but humble entrance spread across the city. Matthew describes the whole city as curious and asking, "Who is this?" (21:10). The city was jam-packed with possibly more than two million people. Many of those present had seen Jesus' miracles and heard His teachings, while others had only heard about Him. They city quickly asked the praising crowd for their estimation of who Jesus was. The crowd answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee" (21:11). Jesus, the great Prophet and King of Israel, had entered the city of Jerusalem.

Conclusion

Before a week had passed, the crowds were calling for the crucifixion of Christ. Their voice of praise had turned into a vote for destruction. Their shouts of Hosanna had turned into shouts of hatred. While the masses were eager to be delivered from Rome, they were not willing to be delivered from their sins. When they had to choose, they chose the insurrectionist Barabbas over the lowly Jesus. The people were willing to lend their lips to Jesus but not their lives.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

*"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth."
—Psalm 78:1*

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

What kind of lesson does Jesus teach today?

Jesus taught a parable.

What does Jesus say that the kingdom of heaven is like?

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who goes out to hire workers.

What did the landowner say that he would pay to the first group that came to work?

The landowner said that he would pay them a denarius.

How many times did the landowner go out and hire people throughout the day?

He went out five times. Once at 6:00 a.m., 9 a.m. (third hour), 12 noon (sixth hour), 3 p.m. (ninth hour), 5 p.m. (eleventh hour).

What happened when the work day was over?

The landowner paid the servants for their work. The last to be hired was paid first and the first to be hired was paid last.

What were they paid?

Everyone was paid a denarius no matter how long they worked.

What did the workers say about being paid the same as the people who had been hired last?

They complained that they were paid the same even though they had worked longer.

What did the landowner say in response?

The landowner said that he had the right to do what he wanted with his money. He asked if they were jealous because he was more generous with some.



Difficult Concepts

Hosanna: Hosanna is an expression which originally meant "Save now!" By the time of Jesus, the expression had largely become a term of praise. Perhaps a comparable expressions today would be "God is great!," "God is powerful!," or "God saves!" The teacher can have the children proclaim the praises and then proclaim "Hosanna."

Donkey: Donkeys would sometimes be ridden by kings in times of peace. Leaders of nations today ride in limousines with bullet-proof glass, not on donkeys. Teacher can ask what the president arrives in when he comes to a city.

Palm Branches: Palm branches had become a symbol of rejoicing in Israel. A parallel to the people's laying palm branches before Jesus may be either the throwing of confetti at a party or the throwing of rice or blowing bubbles at a wedding. Both are traditional American symbols of rejoicing.

"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord:" If someone comes in the name of someone else, they come as that person's representative and with their blessing. Tell children how someone could come in the president's name. If the president really sent him, he would have authority and would represent the president.

Triumphal: Because the people of Jerusalem rejoiced in Jesus' arrival, it was a triumphal entry. He was praised as the Messiah. The people received him as a conqueror, a victor and their savior. A parallel for today could be how a sports team is welcomed back to their home town after winning a championship or a nation's military is welcomed back after winning a war.



Find the Ride

Before today's lesson cut a piece of poster board in the shape of a donkey. After decorating the donkey, hide it somewhere in the classroom. The class should have their eyes closed while you hide the donkey. Divide the class into two teams and have them look for the donkey around the room one team at a time. Each team will be timed and the team with the fastest time of finding the donkey wins the game. After playing this games several times, introduce the students to the donkey in today's lesson. Jesus sends two of his disciples into the village of Bethpage where they would find a donkey for him to ride into Jerusalem. (The donkey piece can then be used for the lesson time.)



A Special Guest

Have another teacher dress as either an Israelite or the donkey from today's lesson. At the beginning of class, inform the students that you have a special guest that has come to visit them today. Before the guest enters the room, instruct the class on

some different ways that they as a class can give their guest a warm welcome (i.e. loud applause, cheering, saying thank you, shaking their hand, serving them, or even bowing at their feet etc.) This would be a good time to go over some different ways that people might greet a very special guest. As the guest enters, the class warmly welcomes the visiting Israelite. At this point the visiting Israelite thanks the class for such a wonderful welcome, telling them how special it has made him feel to have been so nicely welcomed. Then the visitor goes on to tell the class, "But I would like to tell you about another great welcome that I saw in Israel many many years ago!" The visitor can then go on to teach today's lesson, telling of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as if he had actually been there.



Rolling out the Red Carpet

As an activity in class the children can make preparations for a royal welcome. Have them cut out palm branches, make paper link chains for streamers, and practice shouting "Hosanna." Some butcher paper can be rolled out to form a pathway and the children can stand on either side to form a welcoming procession. Show them some pictures of modern-day parades. Have they ever been part of one? Who is the center of attention in a parade, the crowds or the person whom the crowds have come to see? In today's lesson, we are going to focus our attention on Jesus, just as all the crowds did when He came into Jerusalem.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done." —Psalm 78:4

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use alongside the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done right from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Passage Outline

Preparation for Jesus' Entrance (Matt. 21:1–3)

Prophecy of Jesus' Entrance (Matt. 21:4–5)

Praise at Jesus' Entrance (Matt. 21:6–11)

Reading of the Text

Read Matthew 21:1–11.

Introduction

Have you ever seen when someone really important enters a room, say the president, a world class athlete, or even a movie star? Everybody's attention is focused on that one person. Individuals like these really get the red carpet treatment wherever they go. Well in today's lesson Jesus receives this type of treatment from the people of Jerusalem. Just a week before His crucifixion Jesus is ushered into



Jerusalem with the adoration and praises of a huge multitude. Yet was the reason for all this commotion? Why would Jesus receive so much attention from the citizens of Jerusalem? Let's look into Matthew's account of Jesus' triumphal entry to see why the people would shout, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (21:9).

Lead-off Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: Where do we find Jesus and His disciples traveling to at the beginning of today's lesson?

Answer: Jesus and his disciples are on their way to Jerusalem. The Passover, which is a traditional feast to the Jews, was only one week away from being celebrated by all of Jerusalem and Israel. This would be the last Passover feast that Jesus would share with His disciples before His crucifixion.

LOQ: How does Jesus instruct his disciples to prepare for his entrance into Jerusalem?

Answer: Jesus sent two disciples into the nearby village of Bethpage to get a colt for Him to ride into the city. Jesus had given them specific instructions on where to find the colt and what to say to any who stopped them. The disciples did just what Jesus had told them to do and there in the village they found everything as Jesus had said it would be.

LOQ: What significance does Matthew reveal about the way that Jesus entered into the city?

Answer: Matthew records that Jesus riding in on a donkey was direct fulfillment of prophecy. By Jesus riding a donkey's colt he was proclaiming himself to be the promised Messiah. The Old Testament prophet Zechariah had prophesied to the people of Jerusalem that when their king would come he would be riding on a colt, a young donkey (Zech. 9:9).

LOQ: Within the book of Matthew, what might have been significance of the Jesus riding into the city on a donkey?

Answer: In writing how Jesus rode in on a donkey, Matthew was trying to emphasize that Jesus is lowly. Israel had expected a warrior king to come and release from their Roman oppressors. That Jesus did not come in on a white stallion or war chariot showed that he was a humble and meek king. He had not come to pronounce war on Rome, but to give peace to men before God.

LOQ: What happened as Jesus' disciples brought him the donkey to ride on?

Answer: The disciples respectfully laid their clothes on the donkey for Jesus to sit on and they began to head toward Jerusalem. As they approached Jerusalem many of the town ran out to meet Him.

LOQ: What did the citizens of town do as they approached Jesus on the road into Jerusalem?

Answer: The great crowds began to lay their clothes along the road for Jesus to ride over. They also cut down branches from the trees and spread them across the ground. As He began to enter the city all the crowd began lifting up their voices, signing "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (21:9).

LOQ: What did the actions of the citizens of Jerusalem reveal about what they thought of Jesus?

Answer: The great crowds paved the road with their clothes and sang their praises at His entrance. By their actions they were acknowledging that Jesus was the one who would deliver them from Rome. The people's praise of Jesus as the "Son of David" and as the one "who comes in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 21:9) pointed to their belief that Jesus was the promised the Messiah. The crowds rejoiced that God had sent a king to deliver His people.

LOQ: How does Matthew record the rest of Jerusalem reacting to Jesus' humble entrance into the city?

Answer: Matthew describes the whole city as being curious and asking, "Who is this?" The city quickly asked the praising crowd to tell them who this exalted person was, and why he was so important. The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." Jesus, the great prophet and King of Israel, had entered the city of Jerusalem.

Summary

On their way into Jerusalem for the Passover Feast, Jesus instructs two of his disciples to go into a nearby village where they would find a colt for him to ride into the city on. After respectfully laying the clothes unto the donkey for Jesus to ride on, Jesus and his disciples continued on their way into the city of Jerusalem. Hearing that Jesus was on his way, a huge crowd began going out to meet him on the road leading up to the city. When they approached Jesus they showed their submission to him as their King by paving the road with their clothes and singing praises to His name. Their long-awaited King had come, and he had come just as the prophets had long ago written. Riding in on a donkey, with the people praising his name, Jesus showed that he was a humble King of Israel. In just a week's time, this same King would be nailed to a cross for the purpose of restoring man back to God.

Application

In today's lesson, the One that was promised long ago, who would come and restore His people, triumphantly enters Jerusalem on a colt. As the people of Jerusalem had proclaimed, Jesus is indeed the Son of David. Being sent by God, Jesus the humble King of Israel, had come to die for the sins of the world. Because of the life that He would give just a few short days after his arrival into the city, we have reason to rejoice even today. Jesus has now paid the price for sin, leaving each of us with the responsibility of responding to Him in obedience. If we would seek to submit to Him, repenting of our sins and turning to Him, He promises to give us eternal life today.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book® Flash-A-Cards®

Use appropriate A Beka Book® Flash-A-Cards® with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannel Graph

Use appropriate flannel graph pieces with the lesson.



Welcome

Give the children some streamers and blowers and instruct them to be ready to welcome a special guest whom you have invited. Have one of the teachers come in dressed up as an Israelite. After thanking the class for their warm welcome he can tell them about the day he part of this massive crowd of people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem as their king. He can show them some palm branches and cloaks to show what they used instead of streamers. He can also explain what the crowds were shouting and what it meant. Then have the man's countenance change as he hangs his head in sorrow, "If only..." After the man leaves the teacher can ask the children if they know what had upset the man so much. He had left saying, "if only." Explain that "if only" the crowds had really meant what they said—then they would never have crucified the Lord only a few days later. Like them, we need to really love Jesus rather than just say nice things with out lips.



Can You Hear It?

In a parade, we often focus on all the sights, but what about the sounds? Divide the class into different groups, each having their own sound to make: the clip-clop of a donkey, the swoosh of palm branches, the clapping of hands, the shouting of praises, the murmuring of the Pharisees, etc. As you retell the story, allow each group to participate by making their sound at the appropriate time.

Praise and Worship

Bless His Holy Name

Crown Him With Many Crowns

Majesty

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments." —Psalm 78:7

Choose ideas from this section that review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.

Enhanced Coloring Page

After coloring the page, have the children glue cutouts of shirts and palm leaves.



"Bringing the Donkey and Colt to Jesus"

Materials: copies of "Bringing the Donkey and Colt to Jesus" craft pages, crayons, glue, 10" piece of yarn, and scissors

Directions: Give each student a copy of the base sheet (with holes already punched where indicated, and slits cut along the lines), one donkey, and one strip. Instruct them to color the donkeys and the tree. Then have them fold the strip along the dotted lines and set it aside. The students can then pull the yarn through the holes going from the front to the back and back through the front. Insert the folded strip through the slits and glue it to itself to keep from unfolding. (the strip should slide back and forth) Have students glue the donkeys to the slider so that they can slide across the page. Tie the yarn loosely around the necks of the donkeys.



"What Were They Saying"

Materials: copies of "What Were They Saying" craft page, scissors, glue, crayons
Directions: Give each child a copy of the craft page. Have them cut off the bottom strip and then cut out each word balloon. Have them color the face and then glue the word balloons around the face.



"Palm Branch"

Materials: copies of "Palm Branch" on green paper, scissors, glue
Give the students copies of the "Palm Branch" craft page. Have them cut out the palm branch and verse. Then have them glue the verse to the palm branch.



"Triumphal Entry Scene"

Materials: copies of "Triumphal Entry Scene," construction paper, scissors, glue, and crayons
Directions: Color and cut out the pieces from the "Triumphal Entry Scene" craft page and glue them to a blank piece of construction paper.



"Jesus' triumphal entry"

Use this worksheet to reinforce the key truths of today's lesson. The worksheet is located at the back of the lesson.

Coloring Pages

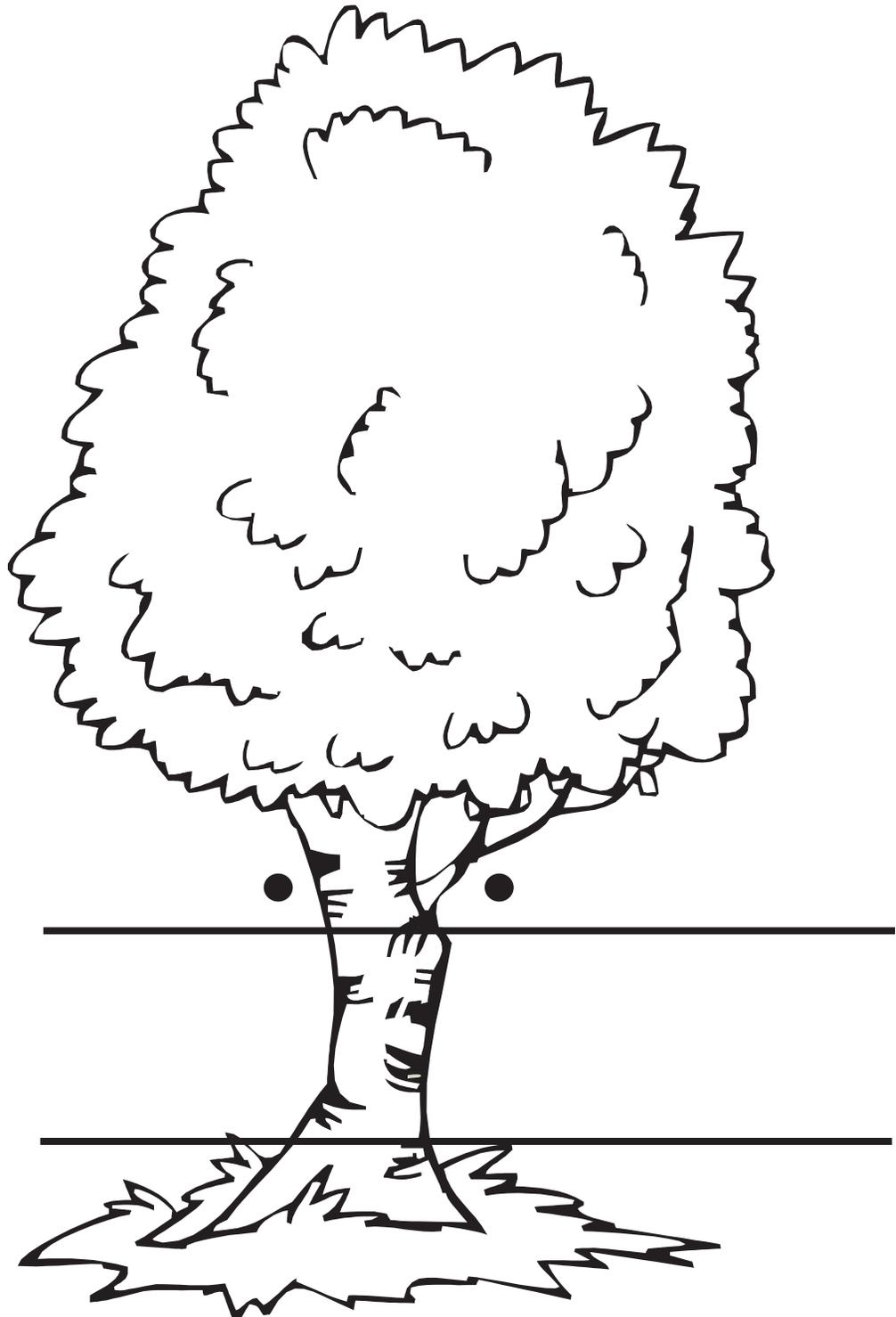
Give each child a copy of the coloring pages at the back of the lesson. He or she can color the pages in class or take them home to color.



MEMORY VERSE

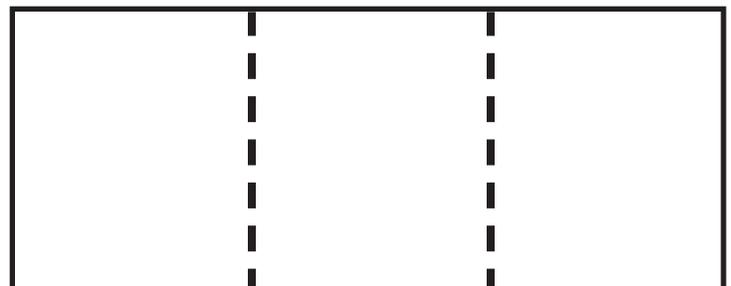
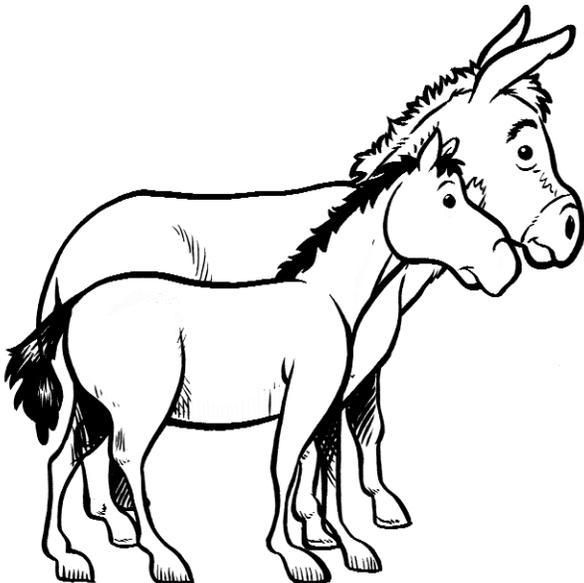
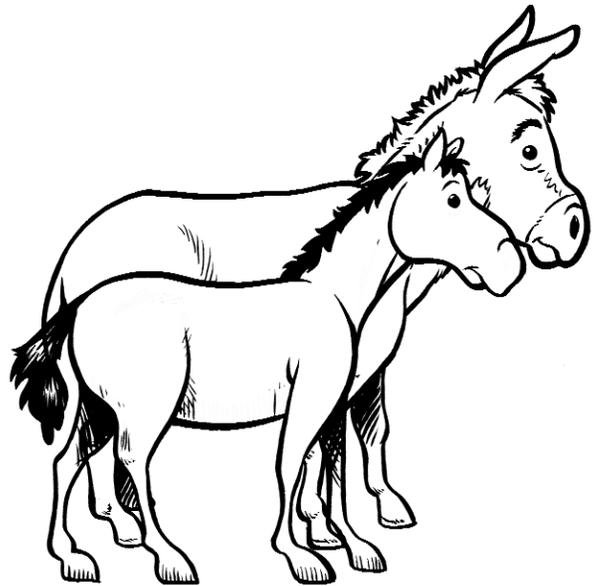
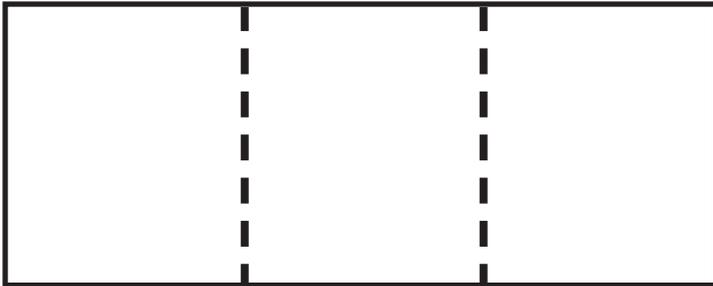
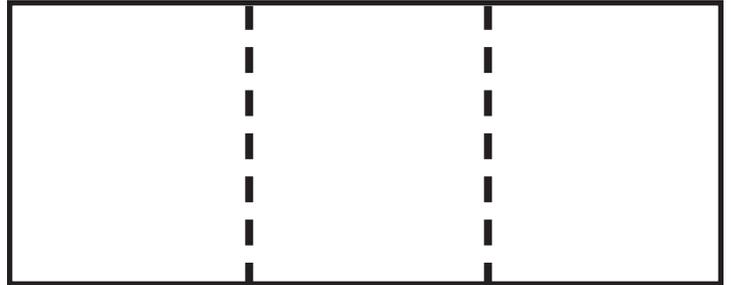
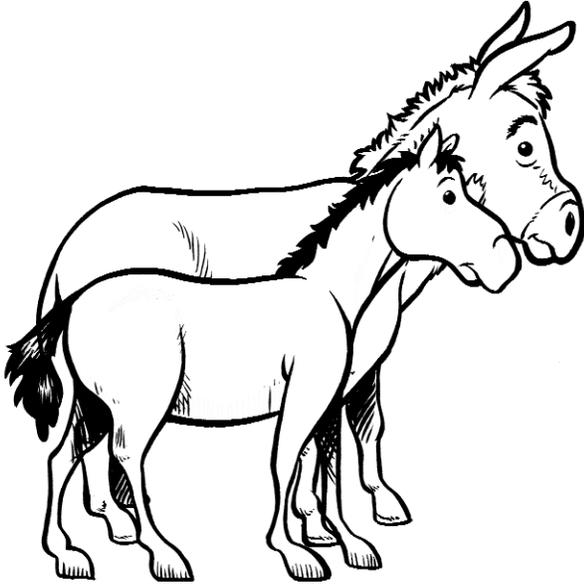
"Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Hosanna in the highest!'" —*Matthew 21:9b*

Bringing the Donkey and Colt to Jesus



Jesus said to two of His disciples, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to me" (Matt. 21:2).

Bringing the Donkey and Colt to Jesus



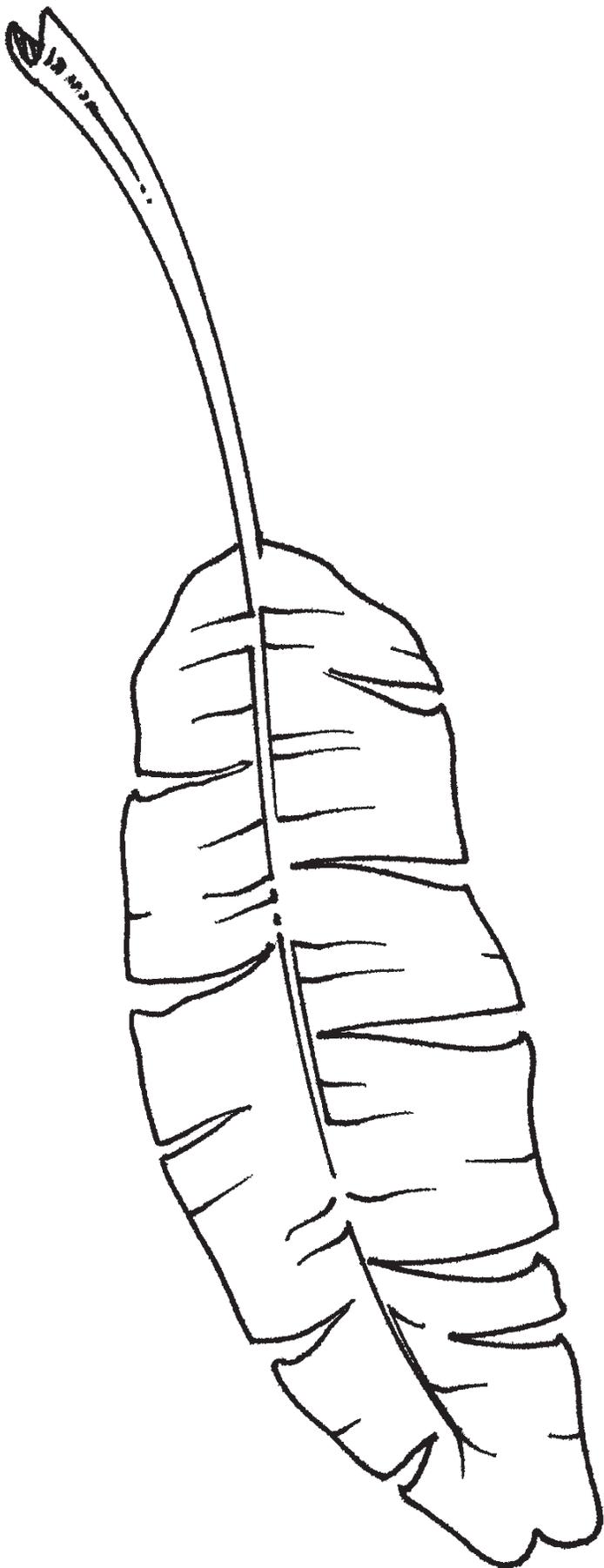
What Were They Saying?



Matthew 21:9

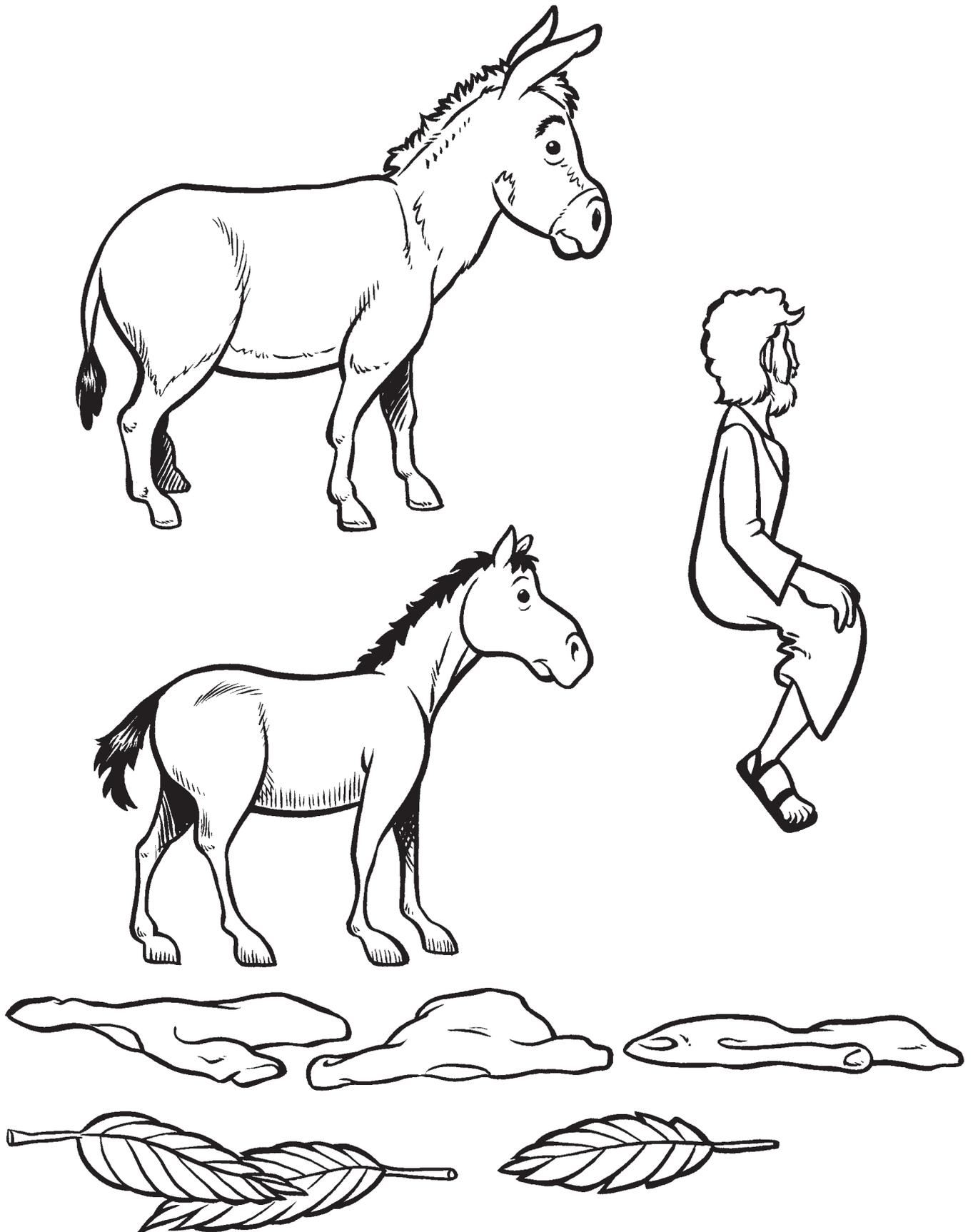
<p>Hosanna!</p>	<p>Son of David</p>	<p>Blessed</p>	<p>He who comes in the name of the Lord</p>
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Palm Branch



"Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!" —Matthew 21:8

Triumphal Entry Scene



Jesus'

triumphal
entry



Matthew 21:1-11

Name _____

1. What did the multitude do before Jesus arrived in Jerusalem? _____
 - a. spread garments on the road
 - b. cut palm branches
 - c. sang
 - d. all of the above

2. What did the crowds cry out in Matthew 21:9?
“ _____ to the Son of David! ‘ _____ is He who comes in the name of the _____!’ Hosanna in the _____.”

3. What did Jesus tell the disciples to go find? _____

4. True or False: Jesus rode a colt into Jerusalem to fulfill prophecy. _____

5. The crowd was moved and asked, “ _____ ” (21:10).

6. Who did the crowds say Jesus was? _____



**“Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:
‘Hosanna to the Son of David! “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!”
‘Hosanna in the highest!’” —Matthew 21:9**