Preschool–Grade 6

Palm Sunday

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Jesus is the King, so we praise Him with our whole heart.
Bible passage: Matthew 21:1–16 and John 12:12–19. Read them before class.
Memory verse: "And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." *Matthew 21:9 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 6 green paper strips, a marker, tape, a sheet of green paper for each child, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 green strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Matthew 21.

1. Opening game: Who Is This? (5 minutes)

Give clues about a Bible person, one at a time. Kids raise a hand when they know who it is. "He built a big boat. Animals came in two by two." (Noah) "He was a shepherd boy. He beat a giant with a sling and a stone." (David) "He prayed to God, and God shut the lions' mouths." (Daniel) Then say: "One day a whole city asked, 'Who is this?' Today we will find out who they were asking about."

2. Bible story: Jesus Comes as King (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 21, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Many people were coming to the big city of Jerusalem for a feast, a holy time to worship God (John 12:12). Jesus and His disciples were coming too. When they came near a little town called Bethphage, by the mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead (Matthew 21:1).

Jesus told them, "Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me" (21:2). If anyone said anything, they were to say, "The Lord hath need of them" (21:3). An **ass** is a strong, gentle animal that people rode (we call it a donkey today). A **colt** is a young one. No one had ever sat on this colt (Mark 11:2).

The two disciples went and did just what Jesus told them (Matthew 21:6). Long before, God's prophet Zechariah had written that the King would come riding on a colt (21:4–5; Zechariah 9:9). Now it was happening!

The disciples put their clothes on the ass and the colt (Matthew 21:7), and Jesus sat on the colt (Mark 11:7). A very big crowd spread their garments (their coats and robes) on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road (Matthew 21:8). Many people took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Jesus (John 12:13).

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The story continues: The people in front of Jesus and the people behind Him all shouted. **Read Matthew 21:9 from your Bible:** "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." Say: "**Hosanna** is a word of praise. It comes from a prayer that means 'Save now!' (Psalm 118:25). **Son of David** means Jesus came from King David's family. He is the King God promised!"

When Jesus came into Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. People asked, "Who is this?" And the crowd said, "This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" (Matthew 21:10–11).

Jesus went into the temple, God's house. Blind people and people who could not walk came to Him, and He healed them (21:14). Children in the temple shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" too. Some leaders were upset, but Jesus told them that God makes praise come out of the mouths of children (21:15–16).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. How many disciples did Jesus send to the village? *(Two, Matthew 21:1)*
2. What did they find tied up? *(An ass, and a colt with her, 21:2)*
3. What did the people spread on the road? *(Their garments, and branches from the trees, 21:8)*
4. What did the people shout? *("Hosanna to the Son of David," 21:9)*
5. Who shouted Hosanna in the temple? *(The children, 21:15)*

4. Memory verse: Branch Verse game (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 green strips up in order, like leaves on a branch: *And the multitudes that went before, / and that followed, cried, saying, / Hosanna to the Son of David: / Blessed is he that cometh / in the name of the Lord; / Hosanna in the highest. Matthew 21:9.* Explain the old words: **multitudes** means big crowds; **went before** means walked in front; **cometh** means comes; **in the name of the Lord** means God sent Him; **in the highest** means up in heaven. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The people praised Jesus as their King. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). In that same week, Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: praise Jesus every morning. Say, "Hosanna! Thank You, Jesus, for being my King!"

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Palm Sunday word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/palm-sunday-word-search), the Palm Sunday crossword, maze, coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/palm-sunday), or **Hosanna Branches:** each child folds a sheet of green paper in half the long way. Snip cuts from the open edges toward the fold, a finger apart, stopping a finger short of the fold (cut for the children who need help). Open it a little: now it looks like a palm branch. Kids stand in two lines facing each other, "the people that went before" and "the people that followed." Each line takes a turn waving its branches and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Then everyone says the whole memory verse together.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus, our King. Help us praise You with our whole heart, at church and at home. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks why we call it Palm Sunday: the people took branches of palm trees (John 12:13). John says Jesus came to Bethany six days before the passover, and this was the next day (John 12:1, 12). Christians remember it on the Sunday before Easter, the start of the week Jesus died and rose again.

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