

General Church Education



Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11; Zechariah 9:9

Lesson 31

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11; Zechariah 9:9

For Parents and Teachers

On Palm Sunday the Lord entered Jerusalem as king. He rode on a donkey, an ancient sign of a king. People welcomed Him with great rejoicing, placing their garments in His path and shouting as they waved branches. The Writings reveal the spiritual significance of this story. The donkey pictures our natural reasoning ability that makes it possible to think and reflect on experiences in the natural world. Without it we could not become useful. But our natural reasoning needs to willingly subordinate itself to spiritual reasoning. This is represented by the Lord riding on the donkey. Without this our selfish inclinations will rule over our heavenly ones. It is impossible to subordinate all selfish motives at once. Yet the people spreading their garments and palm branches in the Lord's path pictures the desire to subordinate all thoughts and principles to the law of the Lord. Though the crowds welcomed the Lord as king, they sadly changed their minds when they realized He was not the king they expected.

Following the overall theme, the Palm Sunday and Easter lessons focus on prophecies and their fulfillment during the Lord's life on earth. The cruel mistreatment ending with the Lord giving up His earthly life is certainly tragic, but we can look to the prophecies for their message of hope. They promised that He would rise with all power to bring joy and freedom to a world devoid of spiritual qualities.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord was received as King when He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.
- The Lord came on earth to be King and Savior of all people, not to be an earthly king.
- The Lord came to conquer evil.

From the Writings

We each have inner depths and an outer surface. Our inner depths are called the inner self, and our outer surface is called the outer self. Few people know what the inner and outer self are. The inner self is the same as the spiritual self, and the outer self is the same as the earthly self. The spiritual self is what gains intelligence and wisdom from things seen by heaven's light, but the earthly self, from things seen in worldly light. Heaven, after all, has nothing but spiritual objects in it, while the world has nothing but earthly objects in it.

We all were created in such a way as to enable the spiritual and natural dimensions in us—that is, our spiritual self and earthly self to harmonize, or act in concert. Our spiritual self then ought to manage everything in our earthly self, and our earthly self ought to obey it, as a servant obeys a master or mistress. *Arcana Coelestia* 3167

Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11; Zechariah 9:9

Words to Understand

hosanna—a Hebrew word that means “save now”
disciple—a student or one who learns
multitude—a great number of people
salvation—being saved from danger or destruction
mute—not being able to talk

The Lord and His Disciples

When the Lord lived in the world He spent the last three years of His adult life preaching, teaching and healing. People gathered around Him wherever He went because “He had the words of life.” What He said let people see what is true and good. Listening to Him changed their thinking and brought healing to their lives. The Lord also healed their bodies of many diseases. People who were lame walked, those who were mute talked and even some who were dead were brought back to life. All these healings of mind and body could be done because people came to believe in His power as a miracle worker. They saw His Divine power, but they did not yet understand He was God.



Some people left everything they had to follow the Lord. They traveled with Him around the country and learned from Him. Many people became the Lord’s followers but twelve men were His closest disciples. Each year Jesus and these twelve disciples would travel to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

The Passover

Do you remember why the Passover celebration was so important to the Jews? Exodus teaches about the first Passover feast when the Hebrews ate this special meal quickly so they would be ready to leave Egypt. In the tenth plague all the first born of Egypt died, but death “passed over” the houses of the Hebrew slaves. When Pharaoh said they could all leave they made their escape. Every year

thereafter the Passover was celebrated to remember this great deliverance from slavery by the Lord. In this lesson we will learn about the beginning of the Lord's last week on earth, which was the week when Passover was celebrated, and see how more of the ancient prophecies were fulfilled.

Read Matthew 21:1-11.

How was the Lord received as He came into Jerusalem? The multitudes welcomed Him. The Jewish people recognized the Lord as king and ruler of their lives as He rode down the path on a donkey. It may seem strange to people today that the Lord did not choose to ride on a more elegant animal such as a horse. But it was the custom at this time for a king to ride on a donkey. The people knew this and thought that He was declaring Himself to be king when He entered the city at the time of the festival. Growing numbers of people were following Him. Many hoped He would lead the Jews against the Romans who were governing them. They wanted their nation to become great and powerful in the world instead of being ruled by foreigners.



Hosanna to the King

Did you notice that the people put their garments in the Lord's path? They shouted, "Hosanna!" and called Him the son of David. You remember that David was the mighty king who made the nation of Israel strong and famous many years in the past. The crowds cried out, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" from Psalm 118:26. More people joined in the glad shouts and they waved palm branches in the air. The spreading leaves of the palm branches were a symbol of victory and glory. You can imagine the happy scene as the crowds joined in the celebration of their King entering the city. So much of what we read in this story was prophesied long before the Lord lived on earth. **Read Zechariah 9:9**

What parts of the reading from the book of Zechariah remind you of the Palm Sunday story? This prophecy gives many clues about the final week of the Lord's life in the world. Did you

notice that this verse is very joyful? It speaks of rejoicing and shouts. It talks about a special King coming, one who is just and will bring salvation.

The Great Prophet

Not all of the people in Jerusalem knew Jesus. Some asked who was being welcomed with such great shouts and attention. The answer was: “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.” A prophet is one who speaks for the Lord. A prophet also does things that teach truths the Lord wants people to know. For example, by entering Jerusalem just as a king would, the Lord Himself was showing the whole world the great truth that He is the King of heaven and earth.



King of Heaven

A few days later the welcoming crowds discovered that Jesus was not the kind of king they had expected or wanted. He was not interested in earthly power and glory. The Lord had come to save people from evil. He had come to help them fight their spiritual enemies, to learn and find healing in the loving truths that lead to heaven. But they were not interested in this kind of salvation and quickly turned against Him.

Welcoming the Lord as Our King

The story of Palm Sunday invites everyone to welcome the Lord as King in their lives. When we pray, “Thy kingdom come” as we recite the Lord’s Prayer we are asking the Lord to be our personal King. We too can become His disciples as we turn to Him for our salvation.

Discussion Ideas

- The Lord chose a humble birth and He chose to suffer death. Everything He did was for a good reason. Talk about looking for good in difficult situations.
- Talk about the fact that there are religious reasons for celebrating Easter—not only commercial ones.

Activity Overview | Palm Sunday

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.

But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you. Mark 16:4-7

Songs

Lo! They Come in Glad Procession

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-lo-they-come-in-glad-procession/>

Lift Up Your Heads, Rejoice

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-lift-up-your-heads-rejoice/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Activity 1 | The Lord’s Journey to Jerusalem
- Activity 2 | The Lord is King (write in Hebrew and Greek)
- Picture to Color—Entering Jerusalem (Matthew 21)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Watch GCED’s HeartFelt Bible video, *Jesus Rides into Jerusalem*, at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-jesus-rides-into-jerusalem/>
- Did you know that anything we love a lot can be like a king to us? For example, if we love our parents, we will try to please them and do what they say. Or, if we love toys, we will do everything we can to get more toys, like beg for them or save our money to buy them. Sometimes our friends are like “kings” to us. Think of things you might do for a friend. Then decide what are good things and what might not be good. Ask yourself, should a friend be like a “king” to you?
- Imagine you were one of the children in the crowded city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Think about how it might feel to see the people waving palm branches and welcoming the Lord as King.

Activity 1 | The Lord's Journey to Jerusalem

Create a diorama showing the Lord's journey from the village of Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, toward Jerusalem. The people waving palm branches and laying garments along the roadway were welcoming the Lord as their King. We, too, can welcome the Lord as our King.

Materials Needed

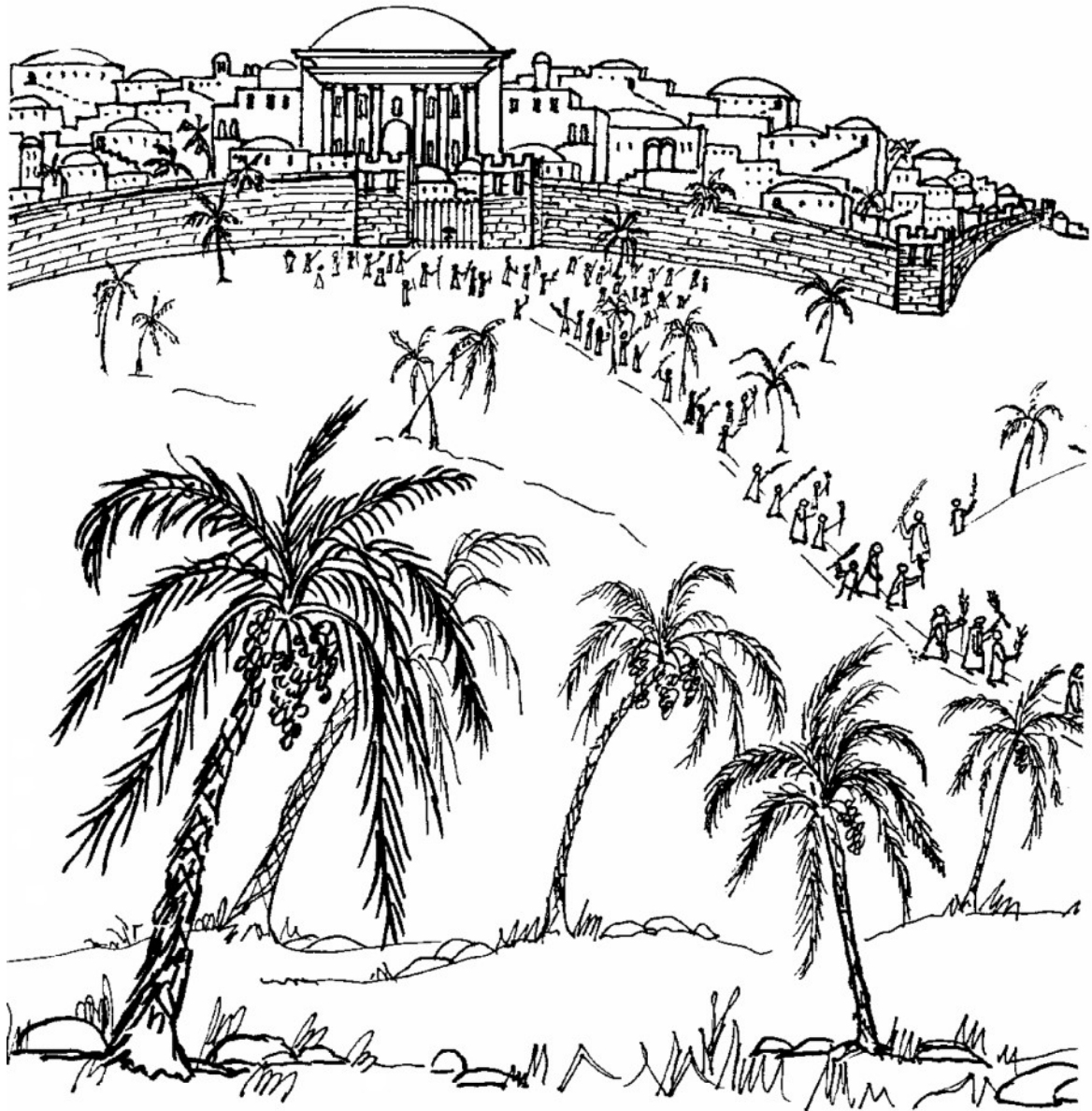
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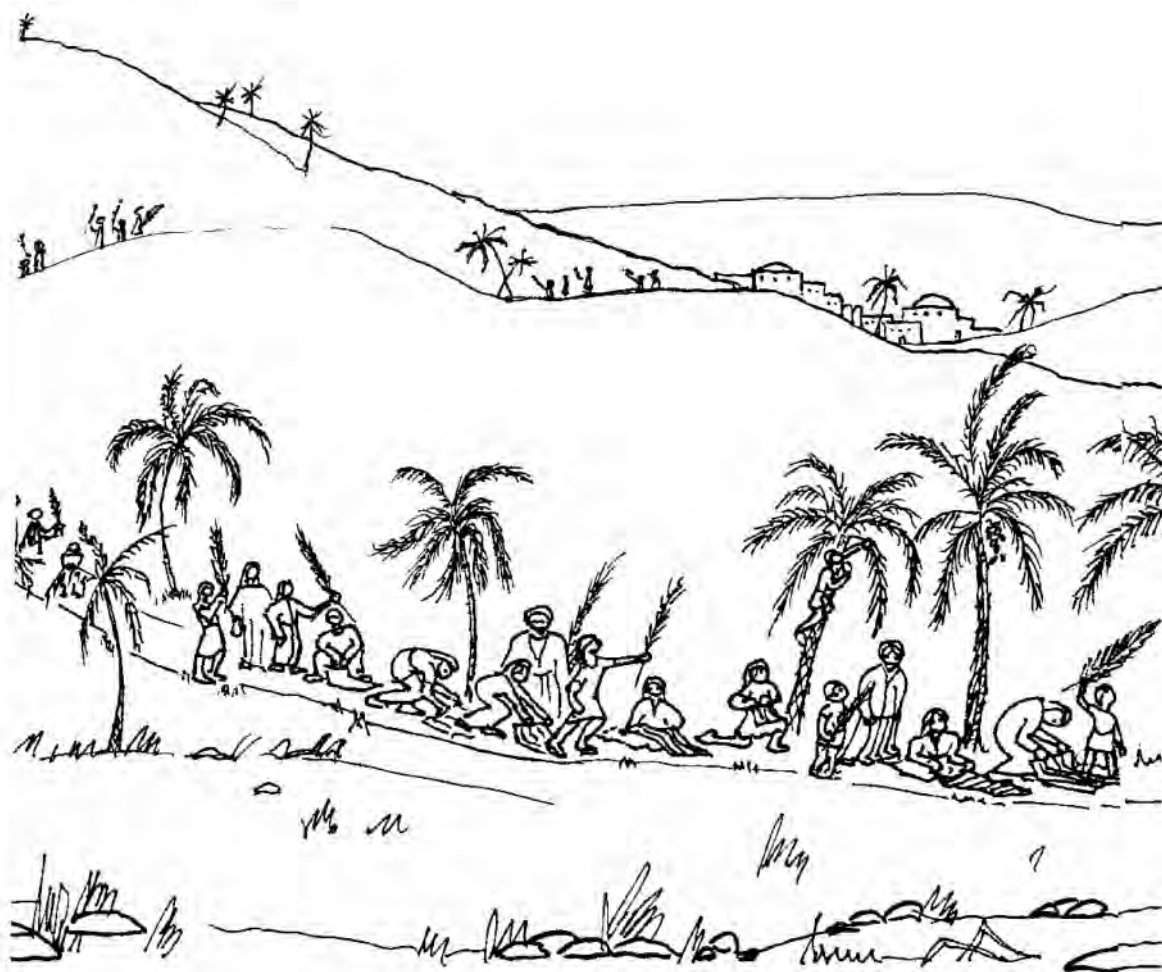
crayons, markers or colored pencils

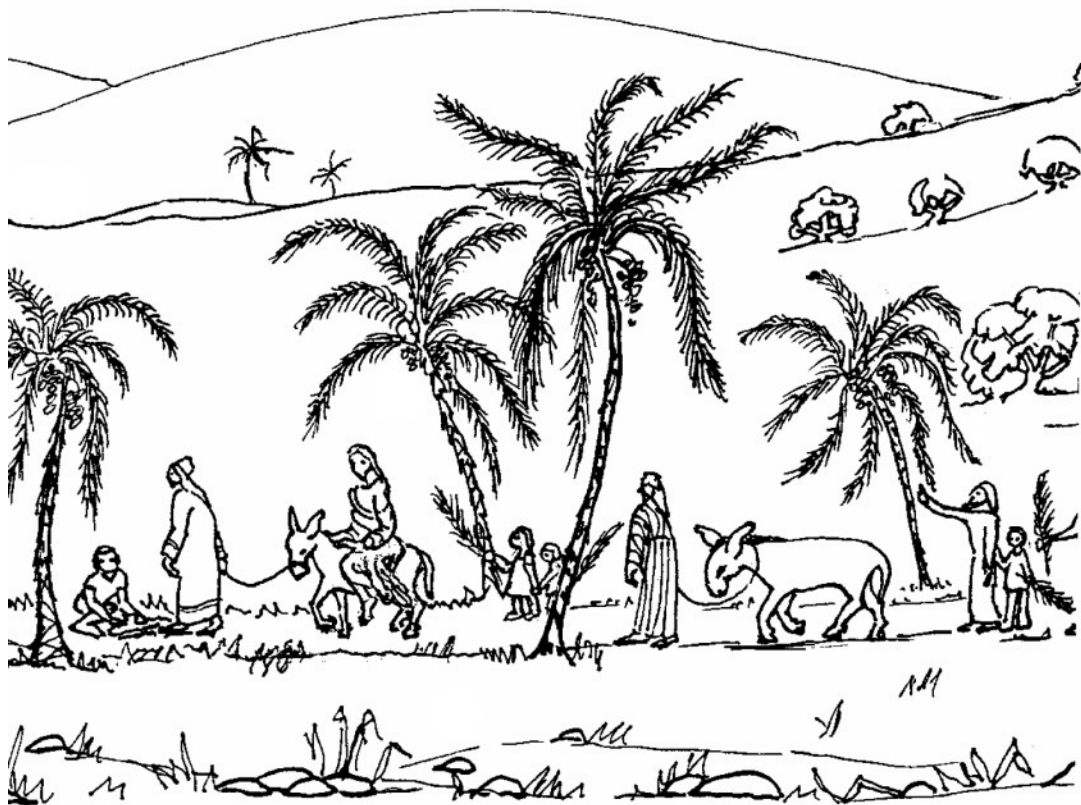
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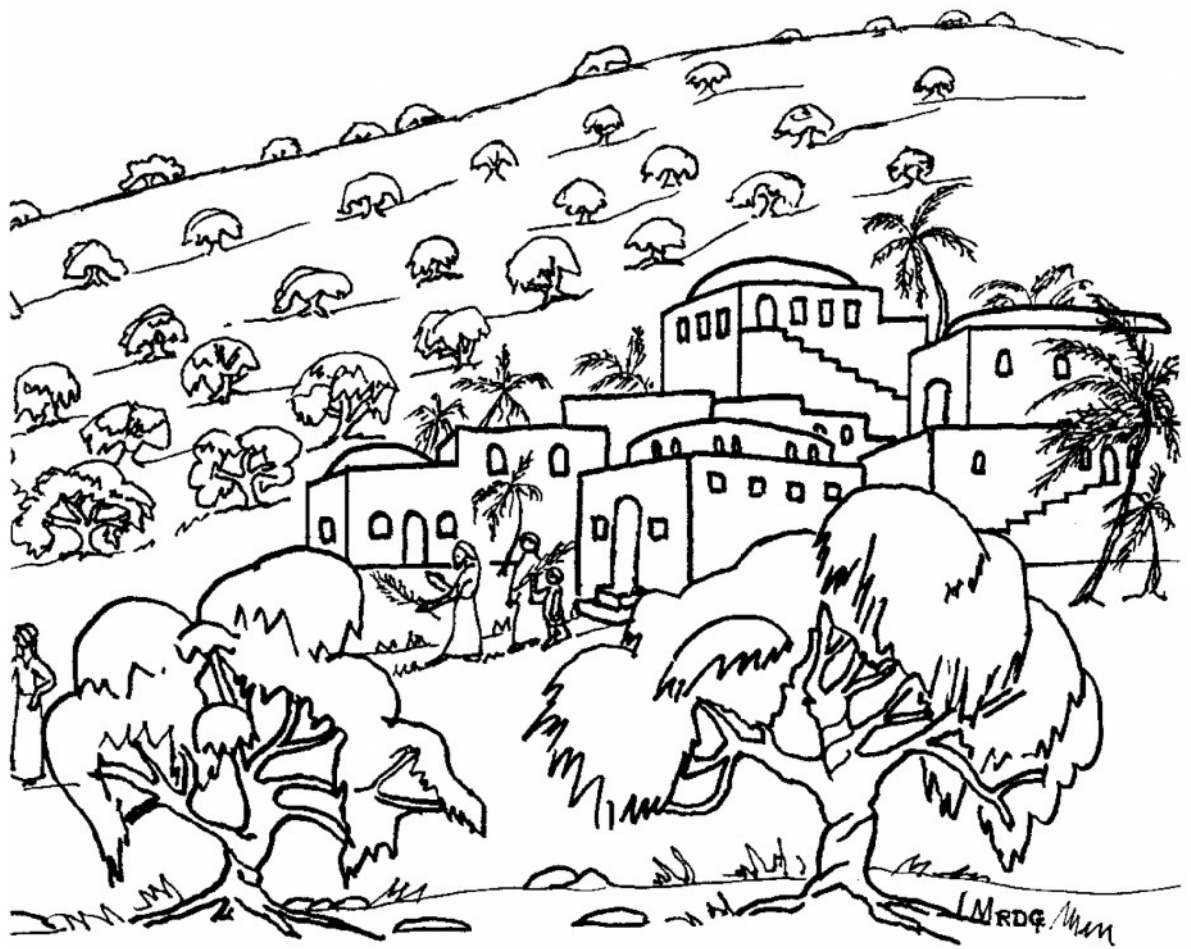
Directions

1. Color each of the 4 diorama panels on the following pages using colored pencils or fine-point colored markers.
2. Fold each panel at the dotted lines along the sides.
3. Use tape to fasten the panels into a diorama using the dotted lines at the sides of the pictures as a placement guide.
4. Display.









Activity 2 | The Lord is King

Write Messiah in Hebrew, and Christ in Greek.

The Lord is King for ever and ever. Psalm 10:16

At the time the Lord was born, the Jews were waiting for the Messiah to come and save them from their enemies. The angels who appeared to the shepherds to tell them of the Lord's birth said,

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior,
Who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11).

The name “Christ” is Greek for Messiah. It also means the “Anointed One” and “King.”

Copy the words “Messiah” in Hebrew, and “Christ” in Greek on the lines below.

מָשִׁיחַ

Messiah

Χριστός

Christ

