



Memory Verse: Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9)

(Parents: You can choose either opening activity or do both, whichever works best for your family! Feel free to adapt depending on the number of kids and their ages/maturity levels.)

Opening Activity Option 1: *(You'll need to prep this activity ahead of time)* Divide the memory verse into small sections (1-3 words per section). Write them out on small pieces of paper or post-it notes. Choose a room in the house and don't let the kids know what you're up to as you hide the paper/notes all over the room. When you're ready to begin the lesson, say: **We're going on a treasure hunt to find God's word!** As your child(ren) find the various notes, have them gather them all together and try to put it in order. Read it aloud several times together as a family.

Opening Activity Option 2: *(You'll need to prep this activity ahead of time)* Turn to the last page of the lesson and cut out the memory verse puzzle. Mix up the pieces and see how quickly your child(ren) can solve the puzzle. Two copies are included. If you have a scanner/printer at home, you can make extra copies and have your kids race to see who can solve the puzzle first!

Story: Expecting the Unexpected – Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Main Point: Jesus was not the kind of King or Messiah the people were waiting for, but He was exactly the King and Messiah we *all* needed.

Say: Today is Palm Sunday! *(or, we just celebrated/are going to celebrate Palm Sunday, depending on when you do this lesson)* Who can tell me what we usually do on Palm Sunday? What are we celebrating? That's right! Palm Sunday is the day Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and the people waved palm branches and declared that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of David. They wanted to make him their king.

Ask: When you think of a king, what comes to your mind?

Say: Those are great ideas! And the Jewish people in Jesus' day had some ideas about what a king should be, too. They had had great kings before, like David and Solomon, and they were waiting for a new king to come who would defeat their enemies. Do you know who their enemies were? The Romans! The Romans were oppressing the Jews with heavy taxes. To make matters worse, one of the Roman emperors, Antiochus Epiphanes, had defiled God's holy temple and persecuted the people. So the people were expecting a warrior king to ride in on his magnificent horse and beat the bad guys so they could be free again to live as God's people. They thought Jesus would be that kind of king. But Jesus didn't ride into Jerusalem on a war horse, did He? Let's read about what really happened that day.

Read Mark 11:1-10 (if you have older kids, have them take turns reading verses out loud to the family)

Ask: Do you know why Jesus chose a donkey instead of a horse?

Say: *(You can adapt this part depending on their answers)* Jesus chose a donkey because a horse represented war, but a donkey represented peace. Jesus knew He had come not to bring war and destruction, but to save people from the REAL oppressor, which is our sin. Let's watch a quick video that talks more about this. *Go to YouTube and enter the search "Our King (Palm Sunday)." Click on either of the top two videos that pop up—they have the same material, just different voiceovers. If you choose not to watch the video, read the following:* Of course, Jesus is the King of Kings. He is King over everything because He is God! But He is not

the kind of king the Jewish people thought He would be. He had come to save them, but not from their enemies or Roman rule. Jesus had come to save His people and the rest of the world from their sins. This would be hard for many Jewish people to accept. They had expected for so long that the Messiah would be a warrior king, but Jesus wanted them to see that He would not be that kind of king yet.

Ask:

1. The Jewish people did not get what they expected, but they did get what they needed: a Savior from their sins. Have you ever wanted something that you didn't get, but you did get what you needed?
2. How did that experience make you feel?

Say: Right now, we are experiencing some pretty big changes as a family that we were not expecting. But these changes are helping us to be able to spend more time together, and maybe that was something we needed. Even though we can't celebrate today in church like we usually do, we can still celebrate as a family. Let's make some homemade palm branches to help us celebrate Palm Sunday!

Craft Activity: Make Your Own Palm Branches

Supplies Needed Per Child: green construction paper, pencils, jumbo craft sticks, and glue sticks.

Have your kids trace their hands several times on the construction paper and cut them out. Glue one hand cutout to the top half of the craft stick. Then glue the next couple of hands onto each other, building it so the fingers point up and out.

**Discussion:**

If you've been keeping a "HISKids at Home" journal, pull it out now. As your kids work on their craft, talk about and write down answers to the

following questions and any other notes from the lesson that you want to remember as a family.

1. How do you think Jesus felt when the people were shouting "Hosanna" and waving the palm branches? (With older kids, you could read Luke 20:41-44 to help them think about this question)
2. What does it mean to expect the unexpected? What kinds of unexpected things have been happening around here lately?
3. What are some things we can do to help us remember that Jesus is our Savior and our King in the good times **AND** in the hard times?

Closing Game: "Pterodactyl" Pharisees

Choose a word or phrase related to Palm Sunday to start the first round. (Examples: "Hosanna," "Palm Sunday," "Jesus is King," "Donkey," "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," "Phylactery" *explain that a "phylactery" is a small wooden box that Pharisees wore on their heads or wrists that contained small portions of Scripture written on them*)

Say: There were SO many people in the crowd when Jesus entered Jerusalem that it was probably hard to hear and understand what people were saying. It was also a time of great joy, except for the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were upset that the people were cheering for Jesus as the Messiah. For this game, we're going to try to pretend to be the grumpy Pharisees. The goal of the game is to NOT laugh or smile. Each of us will go around and take a turn trying to say this phrase (*say the chosen phrase for the first round*), but we have to say it with our top and bottom lips tucked under/over our teeth. If you laugh or smile, you're out until the next round, but you can still laugh/smile to try to get other people out!

