

Palm Sunday

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: The triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Scripture: Matthew 21:8

Memory Verse: A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. - Matthew 21:8

The Children's Sermon

One sunny morning, you decide to go on an adventure in your backyard. You run to your palm tree and carefully pick some branches because these branches are very special. They are signs of winning and happiness. You give a branch to each person in your family because today is a very important day. You all are going to be part of something called a Palm Sunday procession.

You and your family start walking to the road, holding your palm branches high. When you get there, you see lots of other people. They also have palm branches and are very excited. You feel like you are part of a big, happy group. You take off your coat and lay it on the road. This is a way to show respect and welcome someone very special.

This special person is called the Messiah. He is coming to town, and everyone wants to greet Him. People start singing, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." You join in, singing loudly and feeling joyful. This is what the Palm Sunday procession is all about.

Now, let's imagine what it was like back then. The roads were not like the roads we have today. They were dusty and full of stones. So, when people laid their coats on the road, it was a big deal. It showed that they really cared and wanted to honor the Messiah.

As the Messiah came closer, riding on a donkey, everyone waved their palm branches even more. Did you know that the donkey is a symbol of peace? That's right. The Messiah didn't come on a big, scary horse like a warrior. He came on a donkey, showing that He brought peace.

The Palm Sunday procession was like a big parade. Imagine being in that crowd, feeling the excitement and happiness. Everyone was there for the same reason - to welcome the Messiah and show Him love.

But why do we remember this day and call it Palm Sunday? Well, it's because this day reminds us of the love and peace that the Messiah brings. It's a day to be happy, to sing, and to be kind to others. Just like the people back then, we can show love and kindness in our own ways.

Maybe we don't have palm branches, but we can still be part of the Palm Sunday procession in our hearts. We can be kind to our friends, help our family, and share our toys. These are ways we can spread love and peace, just like the Messiah did.

And remember, the Palm Sunday procession was just the beginning of a very important week. It was a week that showed how much the Messiah loves us. He taught us to be kind, to forgive, and to be good to each other. That's why we celebrate Palm Sunday - to

remember these important lessons and to start the week with joy and love in our hearts.

So, next time you see a palm branch or hear about Palm Sunday, think about the big, happy parade. Think about how you can be part of the Palm Sunday procession in your own life. How can you spread love and peace to the people around you? How can you show kindness and make others happy?

Remember, even small acts of kindness are very powerful. They can make someone's day better and spread happiness just like the palm branches waved in the air. So, let's be like the people in the Palm Sunday procession, full of joy and ready to make the world a better place with our love and kindness.

And that's the story of Palm Sunday and why it's so special. It's a day to remember the love and peace that the Messiah brings and to share that love with everyone around us. Let's keep the spirit of the Palm Sunday procession alive every day by being kind, loving, and peaceful.

Bible Memory Verse

A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. -

Matthew 21:8

You Will Need:

- Green construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons

-Tape

Get Ready:

- Cut the green construction paper into leaf shapes ahead of time.
- Write one word of Matthew 21:8 on each leaf.

Do This:

1. Mix up the leaves and spread them out on a table or the floor.
2. Ask the children to find the leaves and arrange them in order to form the memory verse.
3. Once the verse is correctly arranged, have the children tape the leaves onto a larger piece of paper or a poster board to create a 'road' of palm branches. Encourage them to decorate around the leaves with markers or crayons to add more details or designs.
4. Discuss the significance of the verse and how people showed honor to Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. Encourage the children to think of ways they can show honor and love to Jesus in their daily lives.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Large green fabric pieces or green construction paper (to simulate palm branches)
- Small stones or pebbles
- A toy donkey or a picture of a donkey
- A clear path or area in the room to create a "road"
- Background music (optional): something festive to represent a celebration

Get Ready:

- Set up your room to have a clear path that can represent the road Jesus traveled on during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This could be between rows of chairs or a cleared area in the room.
- Place the toy donkey at one end of the road to represent Jesus entering Jerusalem.
- Spread the small stones or pebbles along the sides of the road to simulate the rough paths of ancient Jerusalem.
- Distribute the green fabric pieces or construction paper among the children as they arrive, explaining that these will be their palm branches.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Matthew 21:8 aloud to the children, emphasizing how the crowd spread their cloaks on the road and cut branches from the trees to spread in Jesus' path. Explain the significance of this act of honor and celebration.
2. Start the background music to set a festive atmosphere, symbolizing the joy of the people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. If using a toy donkey, have one child volunteer to gently move it along the path, simulating Jesus' entry.
3. Encourage the children to lay their "palm branches" (green fabric or paper) on the road in front of the moving donkey, and if comfortable, to shout phrases like "Hosanna!" or "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" just as the people did for Jesus. This allows them to actively participate in reenacting the scene.
4. Once the donkey has traveled the path and the children have laid down their branches, gather them to discuss the importance of welcoming Jesus into our lives today, just as the people of Jerusalem welcomed Him with joy and celebration.

Snack Activity: Palm Sunday Path Treats

You'll Need:

- Green fruit roll-ups

- Pretzel sticks
- Small plastic knives or spreaders
- A plate or tray
- Cream cheese or peanut butter (optional)

Get Ready: Unwrap the green fruit roll-ups and lay them flat on a clean surface. If using cream cheese or peanut butter, have it ready in a small bowl with a spreader.

Do this:

1. Use the small plastic knives or spreaders to cut or tear the fruit roll-ups into shapes resembling palm leaves. You can make them as simple or as detailed as you like, but they should be recognizable as the kind of leaves people might have laid down for Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
2. Arrange your pretzel sticks on the plate or tray to look like a path. This represents the road Jesus traveled on.
3. Carefully place your fruit roll-up palm leaves along the pretzel path, slightly overlapping them to mimic the crowd spreading their cloaks and branches on the road for Jesus. If you're using cream cheese or peanut butter, you can add a small dollop on the back of each fruit roll-up leaf to help it stick to the pretzels.

This snack is not only a fun way to remember the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem but also a tasty treat to enjoy together!

Game Activity: Jerusalem Journey Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag

- A Bible or printed verse of Matthew 21:8

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the sidewalk or pavement, making sure to have at least 8 squares to represent the path Jesus took into Jerusalem. In each square, write a word or phrase from Matthew 21:8 ('A very great multitude', 'spread their garments', 'cut down branches', etc.).

Do this:

1. Before starting, read Matthew 21:8 together and discuss the significance of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Explain how the people used what they had (cloaks and branches) to honor Jesus.
2. Players take turns tossing the stone or beanbag onto the first square. If it lands within the square without touching the lines, the player hops through the squares on one foot, skipping the square with the stone or beanbag. When reaching the end, the player turns around and hops back, picking up the stone or beanbag on the return. Before each turn, the player must say one word from the verse that corresponds to the square they are aiming for.
3. If a player steps on a line, misses the square with the stone or beanbag, or forgets to recite the word/phrase, their turn ends. The next player then takes their turn. The goal is to complete the course with the stone or beanbag landing in each square in order, reciting the words/phrases from Matthew 21:8 to reinforce the Scripture memory.

Craft Activity: Palm Branches for the King

You'll Need:

- Green construction paper or felt
- Scissors
- Glue

- Popsicle sticks
- Markers or paint

Get Ready: Gather all materials on a clean, flat workspace. Ensure each child has access to scissors and glue. If using paint, cover the workspace with newspapers or a disposable tablecloth to prevent stains.

Do this:

1. Read Matthew 21:8 together as a class, discussing the significance of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and how the crowd used palm branches to honor Him.
2. Trace the child's hand on the green construction paper or felt at least six times per child to represent palm leaves. Cut out the handprints.
3. Arrange the handprints around one end of a popsicle stick to mimic a palm branch, gluing them in place. Allow some time for the glue to dry.
4. Once dry, encourage the children to decorate their palm branches using markers or paint, adding details or writing messages like 'Hosanna' or 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'
5. Have a mini parade in the classroom, with children waving their palm branches and recounting the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, emphasizing the joy and celebration of that moment.

Prayer Activity: Palm Leaves of Prayer

You'll Need:

- Green construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready: Cut the green construction paper into the shape of palm leaves. Make enough so each child has one.

Do this:

1. Read Matthew 21:8 together as a class, discussing the significance of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and how people used palm branches to honor Him.
2. Give each child a palm leaf cutout. Ask them to think of a prayer or a wish they have for peace, kindness, or love in their lives or in the world, reflecting on how people showed honor and praise to Jesus.
3. Have the children write their prayer or wish on the palm leaf cutout using markers or crayons. Encourage creativity.
4. Gather the palm leaves and create a 'pathway' on the floor of your classroom, mimicking the path of palm leaves laid out for Jesus. As each child places their palm leaf on the path, invite them to say a short prayer or share their wish with the class.
5. Conclude by walking the path together, reflecting on the story and their prayers, symbolizing their participation in welcoming Jesus with honor and praise.