

# The Palm Frond And The Rooster

## LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** A study in contrasts for Palm Sunday

**Scripture:** John 12:12-13

**Memory Verse:** "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" - John 12:13

## The Children's Sermon

Let's all crow three times: Cock a-doodle-do! Cock a-doodle-do! Cock a-doodle-do! So, we have two symbols today on Palm Sunday to remind us that we often both celebrate the coming of the savior of the world and at the same time, we turn on him and betray him when times get hard.

Which do you do? Praise God and celebrate his coming, or do you betray him by not keeping your promises? I think for all of us, we do both, just like Peter and the disciples.

Let's both celebrate by waving palm fronds and then let's remember that we need that savior's forgiveness because we have also denied him. One half the congregation yell "Hosanna in the Highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," and the other half say "cock a- doodle-do, cock a-doodle-do, cock a-doodle-do."

Today, in our Palm Sunday Sermon, we're going to talk about a very special day. Palm Sunday is the day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and people waved palm branches to welcome him. They were so happy to see Jesus! They shouted

"Hosanna!" which means "save us." They thought Jesus was going to be a king who would make everything perfect right away.

But, you know, not everything went as people expected. Even though they were happy to see Jesus at first, things changed quickly. This is why we also talk about the rooster crowing. Peter, one of Jesus' friends, said he would never leave Jesus. But then, he got scared and pretended he didn't know Jesus, not just once, but three times! The rooster crowing reminds us of how Peter made a mistake.

Sometimes, we're a bit like the people who waved the palm branches and like Peter. We get excited about Jesus when things are going well, but when it gets tough, we sometimes forget to trust Him. Our Palm Sunday Sermon is a reminder that Jesus loves us, even when we make mistakes. He forgives us and always wants us to come back to Him.

Now, let's imagine we are in that crowd, waving our branches. Feel the excitement! Everyone is cheering and happy. But then, let's also remember how quickly we can forget our promises when we're scared or when things don't go our way. It's okay to feel both feelings because Jesus understands us completely.

In our Palm Sunday Sermon, we also learn about love and forgiveness. Jesus showed us the biggest love by forgiving Peter and still loving him, even after Peter said he didn't know Jesus. This teaches us that no matter what we do, Jesus' love for us doesn't change. He's always ready to forgive us.

Let's think about how we can show love and forgiveness in our lives. Maybe there's a friend you need to forgive, or maybe you need to say sorry for something you did. Remember, Jesus forgives you, and He helps you to forgive others too.

During this Palm Sunday Sermon, we also learn about being brave. It takes courage to stand by our friends and to stand up for what is right, just like it would have taken courage for Peter to say he knew Jesus. We can ask Jesus to help us be brave, especially when it's hard.

Now, let's do something fun. Let's split into two groups. One group will shout "Hosanna in the Highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," just like the people who welcomed Jesus. The other group will gently say, "cock a-doodle-do," reminding us of Peter's mistake but also reminding us of forgiveness.

This Palm Sunday Sermon isn't just about hearing a story from a long time ago; it's about learning how much Jesus loves us and how we can try to be more like Him. We celebrate because Jesus came to save us, and we remember that He forgives us when we make mistakes.

Let's pray together: Dear Lord, we are amazed by your love. Sometimes we are like the people waving palm branches, and sometimes we forget our promises like Peter. Thank you for forgiving us and loving us always. Help us to love and forgive others too. Amen.

So, remember, this Palm Sunday Sermon is about celebration, forgiveness, love, and being brave. Let's carry these lessons with us, not just today, but every day. And let's try our best to be kind, to forgive, and to remember that Jesus loves us, no matter what.

## Bible Memory Verse

**“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” -**

### **John 12:13**

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into long strips, about 2 inches wide.
- Write the memory verse on a whiteboard or large piece of paper where all the children can see it.

Do This:

1. Have each child choose their favorite colors of construction paper strips. They will need about 3-4 strips each.
2. Show them how to glue the ends of the strips together to make a loop, then interlock the next strip through the first loop before gluing its ends together, creating a chain. Continue this process until they have a chain long enough to wear as a necklace or hang as a decoration.
3. While they work, discuss the meaning of the verse and how people celebrated Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. Encourage them to write the memory verse on one of the loops of their paper chain with markers or crayons.

# Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Green construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Sticks or small branches
- Glue or tape
- Bible or printed scripture (John 12:12-13)

Get Ready:

1. Pre-cut the green construction paper into palm leaf shapes. Make sure there's at least one for each child.
2. Gather sticks or small branches from outside. These will be the handles for the palm leaves.
3. Print out or have the Bible ready on John 12:12-13 for reading.

Do this:

1. Start by reading John 12:12-13 to the children. Explain that people welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem by waving palm branches and shouting praises. Highlight the contrast between Jesus, a humble king, and what people usually expect of kings.
2. Give each child a pre-cut palm leaf and a stick. Have them use the markers or crayons to decorate their palm leaves. They can write "Hosanna" or draw symbols of peace and love.
3. Once they're done decorating, help them attach the stick to the palm leaf with glue or tape to create their own palm branch. As they work, discuss the importance of welcoming Jesus into our lives and hearts, not just on Palm Sunday but every day.

4. Conclude by having a mini parade around the room or outside, if possible, with the children waving their palm branches and shouting "Hosanna!" This will help them experience a bit of the joy and excitement people felt on the first Palm Sunday.

## Snack Activity: Palm Sunday Sweet Palms

You'll Need:

- Green apple slices (cut into palm leaf shapes)
- Pretzel sticks (for the palm trunks)
- Cream cheese or peanut butter (as edible 'glue')
- Raisins or chocolate chips (for the 'crowd')

Get Ready: Wash and prepare the green apples by cutting them into palm leaf shapes. This might require an adult's help.

Do this:

1. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese or peanut butter on one side of the pretzel stick. This represents the road Jesus traveled on Palm Sunday.
2. Attach the green apple slices to the top of the pretzel stick with a dab of cream cheese or peanut butter to form the palm branches. These branches were waved by the crowd as Jesus entered Jerusalem.
3. Scatter raisins or chocolate chips around the base of your palm tree on the plate. These represent the people who gathered to welcome Jesus, showing the contrast between the humble entry of Jesus and the royal welcome by the crowd.

## Game Activity: Palm Parade Path

You'll Need:

- Chalk
- Palm branches or green construction paper
- Pictures of a donkey and a king's crown

Get Ready: Before the game, draw a large path on the ground with chalk, making sure there are two distinct sides. On one side, place pictures of a donkey, and on the other side, place pictures of a king's crown. If using green construction paper, cut out palm leaf shapes to use instead of real palm branches.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into two teams. One team will stand on the 'donkey' side of the path, and the other team will stand on the 'king's crown' side.
2. Explain to the children that when Jesus entered Jerusalem, people laid down palm branches before him, treating him both as a humble servant (represented by the donkey) and as their king (represented by the crown). This game will help us remember the contrasts of that day.
3. When you say 'Go', children from both teams will hop, skip, or walk along the path towards a finish line, while waving their palm branches or paper palms. As they move, they can shout 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' just like the people did for Jesus on Palm Sunday.
4. The first team to have all members cross the finish line while demonstrating the theme of 'A study in contrasts' wins. Encourage children to think about how Jesus was both a humble servant and a mighty king as they participate in the game.

## Craft Activity: Palm Sunday Parade Craft

You'll Need:

- Green construction paper or real palm leaves

- Crayons or markers
- A small wooden stick or a straw for each child
- Tape or glue
- Scissors
- Printable Jesus on a donkey picture (optional)

Get Ready: If using construction paper, cut out palm leaf shapes beforehand. Print out pictures of Jesus on a donkey if you're not drawing them.

Do this:

1. Give each child a palm leaf shape or a real palm leaf. Have them write 'Hosanna' on one side with crayons or markers. This represents the joy of Jesus' arrival.
2. On the other side of the palm leaf, have them draw or write something sad or challenging they face, representing the contrasts of life and the upcoming challenges Jesus would face.
3. Attach the palm leaf to the wooden stick or straw using tape or glue to create a parade palm. If using the Jesus picture, have them color it, cut it out, and attach it to another stick. They can now reenact the Palm Sunday parade, celebrating Jesus' arrival while remembering the contrasts of joy and challenge.

HINT: Can reuse palms throughout the lesson