

# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



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### THE FIRST PALM SUNDAY

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**📖 Mark 11:1-11 Jesus enters Jerusalem as a king**

**🎯 Aim: To know the surprising way Jesus arrived in Jerusalem**

As Jesus entered Jerusalem on a colt, he surprised a lot of people. In today's session we will explore the surprising story of Palm Sunday. We'll think about the reaction of the people on that special day and look at the different ways the story is told in the Gospels.

Each child will need:

- Palm Sunday handout
- A large clean pebble
- Paints, acrylic paint and fine paint brushes or acrylic markers to decorate the pebbles
- An acrylic sealer, varnish or spray (optional)
- Pens/pencils
- Memory verse wristband

You will need:

- To enlarge the memory verse poster, for display
- 'Thank you, Lord' poster

## Start It

**💬 Say:** In today's Bible story Jesus took everyone by surprise.

**Ask:**

- Do you like surprises? If so, why / why not?
- What makes something a surprise?

**💬 Say:** Choose a member of your family or one of your friends. Think about how you would surprise them. When you have thought carefully, how would you fill in the blanks in this sentence?

'I would choose to surprise ..... by .....

Give each child the opportunity to share the name of the person they would choose to surprise and discuss how that person would react.

## Sing It

**💬 Say:** The people reacted to Jesus' surprise by singing songs of praise. Now it's your turn to do the same.

'Hosanna rock' by Yancy & Little Praise Party (2 mins 19 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVwhdqDrfz8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVwhdqDrfz8)

# Tell It

**Say:** So far, we have had a few clues about the surprising behaviour of Jesus. Now we are going to discover something else that Jesus did to surprise everyone. It is a surprise that we remember every year on Palm Sunday. Watch the clip to find out more.

## Video

*God's story: Palm Sunday* by Crossroad's Kids' Club (2 mins 47 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITmbTuutBgg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITmbTuutBgg)

**Ask:** Before he went into Jerusalem, Jesus asked his disciples to do something surprising. What was it?

### Read:

**'Jesus and his followers were coming closer to Jerusalem. They came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany near the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of his followers. He said to them, "Go to the town you see there. When you enter it, you will find a colt tied which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here to me. If anyone asks you why you are doing this, tell him, 'The Master needs the colt. He will send it back soon.'"**

**'The followers went into the town. They found a colt tied in the street near the door of a house, and they untied it. Some people were standing there and asked, "What are you doing? Why are you untying that colt?" The followers answered the way Jesus told them to answer. And the people let them take the colt.'**

— (Mark 11:1-6 ICB)

### Ask:

- How would you have reacted if Jesus had asked you to do this?
- How would you feel if someone came and took something of yours and said, 'The master needs it'?
- How did the people in the story react? In what way was it surprising?
- The clip asks the question: would you be willing to obey Jesus, even if he asked you to do something you didn't understand? What is your response?

### Read:

**'The followers brought the colt to Jesus. They put their coats on the colt, and Jesus sat on it. Many people spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches in the fields and spread the branches on the road. Some of the people were walking ahead of Jesus. Others were following him. All of them were shouting,**

**"Praise God!**

**God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord!**

**God bless the kingdom of our father David!**

**That kingdom is coming!**

**Praise to God in heaven!"**

**'Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. When he had looked at everything, and since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the 12 apostles.'**

— (Mark 11:7-11 ICB)

**Say:** In Mark's Gospel the people shouted out words from Psalm 118, but the story is told slightly differently in each of the Gospels.

Give the children a copy of the Palm Sunday handout which shares the story from each of the four Gospels. Discuss the differences and similarities between the different versions. Children may wish to annotate the handouts.

**Say:** Just because the versions are different, it doesn't mean they aren't telling the truth about what happened that day. In fact, it would seem suspicious if they were all exactly the same!

### Ask:

- Think of an event that your family or group of friends attended. How would their versions of the same event differ?

- The Gospel accounts of Palm Sunday focus on different parts of the story, but what do they all have in common?
- What was surprising about Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem?

If you want to quickly recap the main parts of the story, then replay the *God's Story: Palm Sunday* clip from 2 mins 17 secs mins to the end.

## Action It

### Ask:

- What surprising thing did Jesus say the rocks and stones would do?
- What do you think he meant?

**Say:** There was nothing that the enemies of Jesus could do to stop the praises and worship of the people. Jesus knew that all of God's creation was made to praise him.

**Say:** Today we are going to make our own praise rocks for you to take home. These will help remind you to praise God every day and give thanks for all the amazing things he does for you.

### Pebble praise

Give each child a large pebble and either paint or acrylic markers to decorate the stones. The children can generate their own praise words to decorate their pebbles or use the ideas and Bible verses listed below.

**Praise words:** Hosanna, Glory, Hallelujah, praise, exalt, adore, worship, hope

**Praise Bible verses:** 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; John 4:24; Hebrews 13:15; Isaiah 25:1; Psalm 42:11; Psalm 9:2

## Pray It

**Say:** In our story today, the people shouted words of praise from Psalm 118. Our memory verse for this month is taken from the same psalm. The verses give us the words we need to praise God every day. Let's have a look at them together.

**'You are my God, and I will thank you.**

**You are my God, and I will praise your greatness.**

**Thank the Lord because he is good.**

**His love continues for ever.'**

— (Psalm 118:28-29 *ICB*)

Display a large copy of the memory verse in the room and read through the psalm together. Give each child a Bible verse wristband.

**Ask:** What is the psalmist thankful for?

**Say:** We're going to use our memory verse to help us say a prayer of praise and thanksgiving. Think about what you are thankful for.

Display the following prayer and give each child an opportunity to say it and add their prayer of thanksgiving.

Thank you Lord for ...

Your love continues for ever.

## Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

APRIL  
SESSION 01

### THE FIRST PALM SUNDAY

 Mark 11:1-11 Jesus enters Jerusalem as a king

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## FOR ME

## TOGETHER



### Pray

We can often be so busy asking God to answer prayers that we forget to say thank you. Use our memory verse for this month to help you say a prayer of praise and thanksgiving every day this week.

**Thank you Lord for ...  
Your love continues for ever.  
Amen.**



### Explore

Did you enjoy painting the rocks this week?

Watch the clip and see if someone at home will try one of these amazing rock painting ideas with you.

*30 Best Rock Painting Ideas - Easy Stone Painting Ideas Very Beautiful Amazing Craft by Style of Life*

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=aG4ZxPcFxso](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aG4ZxPcFxso)



### Song for the week

'Hosanna rock' by Yancy & Little Praise Party

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVwhdqDrfz8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVwhdqDrfz8)



### Memory verse

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**You are my God, and I will praise your greatness.**

**Thank the Lord because he is good.**

**His love continues for ever.'**

— (Psalm 118:28-29 ICB)

### KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

*Kids Alive!* The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

