

Matthew's Holy Week

HOSANNA

Matthew 21:1-11; 27:27-66

What's happening in this story?

From the triumphal entry to the crucifixion, it doesn't get more dramatic than this story. Matthew solidifies Jesus' place as Messiah with the cries of the crowd from Psalm 118—"Hosanna!" Hosanna literally means "save us." Clearly, the people had an expectation of who Jesus was and what he was there to do. Only a few days after this triumphal entry, however, Jesus would be hanging on a cross, crucified.

What does this story mean for kids?

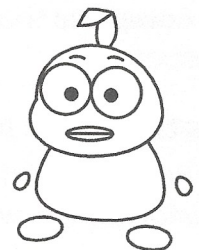
Kids will be struck by how quickly the story moves from a celebration of palms being waved to betrayal by a friend, danger, arrest, and crucifixion. It can be disorienting to see things move this quickly, especially regarding God, who we are encouraged to look to for stability in our own lives. With so much being covered in today's stories, it is difficult to say what any one kid may hear. They may each focus in on a different portion of the story. It will be important to both affirm that each portion is part of the story, but to not pit the different story elements against one another.

Why this theme?

Hosanna is a joyous cry! It is us calling out to God—save us—in moments of both joy and grief. It is the recognition that, even when we least expect it, God can show up and turn everything upside down.

TEACHING TIP

This week can be a difficult teaching week because the story ends with Jesus' death. Help kids remember that Jesus' death is not the end. We can't celebrate Easter yet, but we know there's a miracle coming.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Pencils
- White paper
- Crayons or charcoal
- Clear tape
- Markers

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Palm fronds
- Chenille stems
- Whirl Classroom Song CD
- Music source

WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL KIDS STORY BIBLES • WHIRL KIDS STUDY BIBLES • DVD • LEAFLETS

WELCOME 15

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Set out palm fronds. Have kids make etchings of the leaves by putting paper over them and then rubbing with crayons or charcoal. Have kids write "Hosanna!" on the bottom of their page.

Don't use the pipe cleaners, just have kids show their emotion on their face for each scenario.

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Palm Sunday is the Sunday that happens the week before Easter. What kinds of things do we see and hear on Palm Sunday? (palm branches, story of Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem, the word *hosanna*) When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the people waved palm branches and shouted "Hosanna!" Hosanna means "save us." I wonder why the people shouted "Save us!" at Jesus when he entered the city.

Pray together: Holy God, we give you thanks for the amazing life of Jesus, and as we think about all that happened during Holy Week, we are moved to shout "Hosanna!" Amen.

Be still and know that I am God...

Pass out leaflets, chenille stems, and tape.

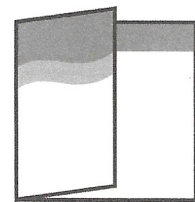
The week between Palm Sunday and Easter is called Holy Week. There are many emotions during this week, from joy and excitement that Jesus has

arrived in Jerusalem, to sadness when we hear the story about Jesus dying. As

I describe a scenario, use your stem to complete the face to show an emotion.

How would you feel if... good friends were coming over for dinner? someone you love died? you got to watch a parade? you got arrested? your friends left you?

- * These things all happen in our stories for this week. Tape your stem on the leaflet to complete the face showing an emotion you choose. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

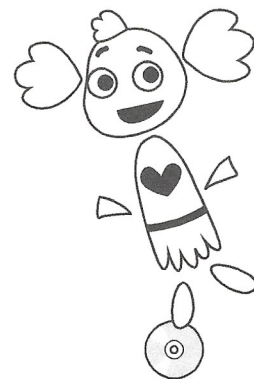
Today the Whirl kids are putting on a musical. Let's watch to see how they do in their performance, with a little help from Leo and Mimi.

View Episode 6, "Hosanna?" on the Year Blue Spring DVD. (10 min, 45 sec)

Ask kids these questions about the video:

THIS IS A LONG ONE.

- What did Leo invent?
- * Why was Mimi so excited to see Leo's invention?
- * What was Mimi reminded of by Ada and Otto at the end of the musical?
- What was something in the musical that surprised you? Why?
- * How do you feel when you hear the stories of Holy Week?



Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles and Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Have older kids find a younger buddy. Invite them to find "Jesus Enters Jerusalem" on page 318 and "Jesus Is Crucified" on page 326 of the Whirl Kids Story Bible. We read and remember many stories at church during Holy Week. Today, we are going to read two of them: "Jesus Enters Jerusalem" and "Jesus Is Crucified." Our first story is filled with excitement for Jesus' arrival! Our second story is sad and ends with Jesus' death. But we know that's not the end.

Pass out palm fronds. Invite kids to listen for Jesus' name. Each time they hear it, they can raise their palm in the air. Read the stories aloud, pausing after you read "Jesus" for kids to raise their palms. Even when we feel sad about Jesus dying, we have hope because we know there's more to the story.

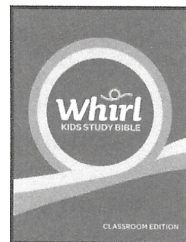
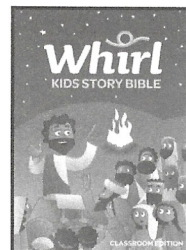
Read Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page. Then read Matthew 21:9 and what Mimi says about that passage on page 1183 of the Whirl Kids Study Bible.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- What did the people do to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem?
- What did the religious leaders in Jerusalem want Jesus to do?
- How do you like to praise Jesus?
- * Why do you think the people changed their minds about Jesus?
- Have you ever been in a crowd like that?

Play together!

Line up to play a Palm Sunday processional version of Follow the Leader. Play "Glory to God," track 5 on the Whirl Classroom Song CD, and let kids parade around the room. Whatever the leader does, the rest of the kids in the line do too. Pause the music periodically to switch leaders. We can celebrate Jesus arriving in Jerusalem like the crowd did.



BIBLE BIT

The place where Jesus died was called Golgotha, which means "the place of the skull." Some people believe that the mountain was shaped like a skull.

WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, listen closely to hear the things that Monty and Clara wanted Jesus to do for the people. Can you name all three?

OUR CHURCH

Find out what special services your church is planning for Holy Week, and get kids involved. They could pass out bulletins, light candles, or participate in other ways.

RESPOND ⑩

Pass out leaflets and pencils.

You can do this activity if there's time, since there are 2 readings this week.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. The stories of Holy Week tell of lots of different things that happened to Jesus and his friends and followers. In the video, we saw a retelling of all of the stories. From the Bible, we read about Jesus coming into Jerusalem and of Jesus' death.
2. On your leaflet are pictures from the video showing the story of Holy Week. Go through each picture and talk about what's happening. Have kids give a thumbs up if the picture shows a happy part of Holy Week or a thumbs down if the picture shows an unhappy part of Holy Week.
3. Help younger kids find an older buddy. **Work together to number the pictures in order of how they happened.** Answers (left to right, top to bottom): 4, 9, 5, 3, 6, 1, 2, 8, 7
4. When you have all of the pictures numbered, talk to your buddy and explain in your own words what happened from start to finish.
- *5. What are some of your favorite parts of the Holy Week stories? What are some of the hardest parts? What does it mean that Jesus' death isn't the end?

LAUNCH ⑩

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

What a difference there was between Palm Sunday and the day that Jesus died. How did the crowd's reaction change from the beginning of the week to the end?

Pass out leaflet panels and markers.

The events of Holy Week are not the final act of the story of Jesus. They are just the beginning of a coming attraction. As the Whirl kids told us, "This isn't the end!" On the blank movie screen, draw a preview of what's coming next.

Send kids out with a blessing. *Help and Thanks prayers*

~~Circle up with kids. God blesses all of us. And that means me (place a hand on your chest). And that means you (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, Go and bless the world.~~

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.