

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Jesus and the crowd

Key-location: Entrance into Jerusalem

Key-repetitions:

- Donkey/colt: Jesus sent disciples to fetch donkey that had never been ridden (Mat 21:2; Mk 11:2-3; Lk 19:30); disciples found donkey (Mat 21:6; Mk 11:4; Lk 19:32); disciples brought donkey to Jesus and threw cloaks over it (Mat 21:7; Mk 11:7; Lk 19:35); Jesus mounted colt (Mat 21:7; Mk 11:7; Lk 19:35).
- People's manifestation of jubilee: people spread cloaks and branches on road for Jesus (Mat 21:8; Mk 11:8; Lk 19:36); the crowd went out to meet Jesus (Jn 12:13, 18); the crowd cheered "Hosanna!" (Mat 21:9; Mk 11:9-10; Lk 19:37-38; Jn 12:13).
- Jerusalem/city: Jesus approached it (Mk 11:1; Lk 19:41); Jesus was on his way to it (Jn 12:12); he wept over it (Lk 19:41); he entered it (Mat 21:10).
- Crowd: came to the feast (Jn 12:12); witnessed that Jesus had raised Lazarus (Jn 12:17); asked who Jesus was (Mat 21:10); the Pharisees said the whole world had gone after Jesus (Jn 12:19).

Key-attitudes:

- Conflicts between Jesus and religious leaders.
- Crowd's jubilation.
- Pharisees' resentment.
- Jesus' sadness for Jerusalem.
- Religious leaders' fear of Jesus.

Initial-situation:

Jesus had three years of public ministry. During the second half of the third year of Jesus' public ministry, Jesus made three trips to Jerusalem to participate in three religious feasts. The first trip was for the Feast of the Tabernacles. During the Feast, there was confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders. On the Sabbath after the Feast, Jesus healed a man who had been born blind. This provoked another conflict with the Pharisees.

Jesus' second trip to Jerusalem was for the Feast of Dedication. Jesus was in the temple area, and claimed that God was his Father. The Jews picked up stones to kill him. Jesus went back across the Jordan River. Jesus left that place to return to Bethany where he resurrected Lazarus from the grave. The Sanhedrin began to plot to kill Jesus. Therefore, Jesus withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim.

Jesus made his third trip to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast.

Initial-problem:

The Sunday before the celebration of the Passover Feast, Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem.

Final-situation:

The Pharisees complained to one another that the whole world had gone after Jesus.

BIBLE STORY

The Sunday before the Passover Feast, Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem and came to the Mount of Olives. Jesus instructed two of his disciples, "Go into the next village. Just as you enter it, you'll find a donkey colt tied there. It has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you why are you untying the donkey, answer him that the Lord needs it and will return it shortly."

They found a colt tied at a doorway, and untied it. Some bystanders asked, "Why are you untying that colt?" The disciples answered as Jesus had instructed them. The people let them take the donkey. The disciples led the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it. (*Cloaks were loose outer garments.*) Jesus mounted the colt. Many people spread their cloaks on the road in front of Jesus, while others cut branches in the fields and spread them on the road (Mk 11:1-8; Mat 21:1-11).

A large crowd had come for the Feast. They heard that Jesus was entering Jerusalem. The crowd went out to meet Jesus, cheering, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!" (Jn 12:12-13).

The crowd that had been with Jesus when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead, kept telling about this miracle they had witnessed. The people who heard about Jesus working this miracle of raising Lazarus went out to meet Jesus (Jn 12:17-18).

Those who ran ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" (Mk 11:9-10).

Some Pharisees in the crowd told Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

Jesus replied, "I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will shout praises" (Lk 19:39-40).

Jesus approached Jerusalem, saw the city, and wept over it (Lk 19:41-44).

Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem (Mat 21:10-11).

The Pharisees said to one another, "This is getting us nowhere. It's out of control. The whole world has gone after him!" (Jn 12:19).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard

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| | to understand? | 6. | How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. | Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. | Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. | What problems did the characters face? | 8. | What does the story tell about God? |
| 5. | How did the characters face their problems? | | |

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did Jesus obtain a donkey for his Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem?
2. What happened when Jesus rode the donkey toward Jerusalem?
3. During his Triumphal Entry, how was Jesus received by:
 - His disciples?
 - People who had witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus?
 - The crowd?
 - The Pharisees?
4. Is your worship like:
 - The curious observer?
 - A participating disciple confused about what is happening?
 - A triumphal celebration?
 - A critical observer?
5. How can we improve the way we worship God?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Jesus came offering peace.** Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey that had never been ridden (Mk 11:2). Custom required that articles used by royalty not be previously used, also items that were dedicated as sacred could not be previously used (Num 19:2; Dt 21:3). Jesus mounted the donkey; he came as the Messiah who was offering peace, without weapons and without an army (Zec 9:9; Lk 19:38).
2. **People react in different ways toward Jesus the King.** During Jesus' Triumphal Entry, several attitudes and actions were obvious:
 - **Disciples' joy.** They were jubilant, praising God for all of the miracles they had seen (Lk 19:37). They still didn't understand everything about Jesus (Jn 12:16); however, they wanted to follow and serve him (Jn 12:26).
 - **Secret disciples' fear.** Some kept secret their faith in Jesus, because they were concerned about what others would think about them (Jn 12:42-43).
 - **Traitor's hidden intention.** Judas, the traitor, was among the disciples pretending to be a loyal disciple; his evil intentions were hidden.
 - **Enemies' conspiracy.** The Pharisees were enemies of Jesus; they rejected him (Lk 19:39); plotted to kill him (Jn 11:53); desired to eliminate anyone who inspired others to believe in Jesus; wanted to kill Lazarus (Jn 12:10-11); were upset when others showed interest in Jesus (Jn 12:19).
 - **Crowd's instability.** The crowd was unstable, flip-flopping from being for Jesus to being against him. The crowd that greeted Jesus with "Hosanna" and "King," six days later was screaming, "Crucify him!" (Jn 12:12-18 with

19:15). In one scene, the crowd stood close to the disciples, praising Jesus (Lk 19:37-38); in another scene, they stood beside their leaders, asking for his crucifixion (Lk 23:21). Then later, they lamented Jesus' condemnation (Lk 23:27) and after his death they were inconsolable (Lk 23:48).

3. **Jesus is worthy of praise and celebration; if people do not praise Jesus, he will still be praised.** A large crowd heard that Jesus was entering Jerusalem. They went out to meet him, cheering, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!" (Jn 12:12-13). Some Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke his disciples. Jesus replied that if the people keep quiet, the stones would shout praises (Lk 19:39-40).
4. **Devotion to God that is based only on curiosity or popularity is shallow and fades quickly.** The crowds cheered Jesus because they heard about his raising Lazarus from the dead. Their adoration was short-lived; their commitment was shallow, because in a few days they would be screaming for Pilate to crucify Jesus.
5. **The city is important to God.** Jesus saw the city of Jerusalem and wept over it (Lk 19:41).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Pantomime Retelling of the Story:

The storyteller tells the story one time. Then the storyteller:

- Chooses a listener to pantomime the story as the storyteller tells it a second time.
- Invites a listener to retell the story.
- Asks listeners if the one who retold the story left out or added to the story.