

Palm Sunday: Different Than Expected



Introductory Question: ***Tell us about a time when something happened differently than you expected.***



We've all had experiences that were different from what we expected. (Incorporate your family's or group's answers to the Introductory Question – for example,) Sam expected to fail his exam, but he passed it! Sarah was expecting that she wouldn't like the taste of a kiwi, but she loved it.

Over 2000 years ago, the Jewish people were expecting a Messiah (an anointed one) to come and save them. They thought He would be an earthly king; they were hoping that He would come, set up His kingdom, and overthrow the Romans who were ruling over them. But when Jesus the Messiah came, He was different from what they expected.

Continue to tell the story from **Matthew 21:1-11 and Luke 19:28-44:**

- Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Why was that unusual? Conquering kings would ride in on a mighty horse, but a donkey symbolized humility and peace. This fulfilled a prophesy in **Zechariah 9:9**, which reads, "Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."
- The people showed their excitement by laying palm branches and cloaks on the road in front of Jesus. They shouted, "Hosanna (save us)!" and "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord." They praised God for the miracles they had seen.
- Some Pharisees in the crowd told Jesus to rebuke the people for what they were saying. He said, "If they keep quiet, the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40).
- As Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it, saying, "If you...had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but...you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you" (Luke 19:42-44).



Invite your family to spend a few minutes in Listening Prayer and Journaling: *As we've listened to these words from the Bible, God has been speaking to us through them. What is God telling you about: Himself, yourself, others, and what to do? You can talk to God about anything.*



When everyone begins to finish Journaling, give each person an opportunity to share what God has been speaking to them. After each person shares, pray for them.

KEY VERSE: Zechariah 9:9

"Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."