

Children and family talk for 28th March 2021- Palm Sunday

Good morning, and welcome to the children and family worship from Christ Church URC, Rayleigh for Palm Sunday.

And we start our worship today by reading from Psalm 118, verses 1-2 and 19.

Oh, thank the Lord, for God is so good! God's loving kindness is forever. Let the congregation of Israel praise God with these same words: "God's loving kindness is forever." Open the gates of the temple – I will go in and give God my thanks.

And we sing: This is the day:

This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has
made,
We will rejoice, we will rejoice,
And be glad in it, and be glad in it

This is the day that the Lord has made,
We will rejoice and be glad in it
This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made.

Our Bible reading today is from Mark 11, verses 1-11.

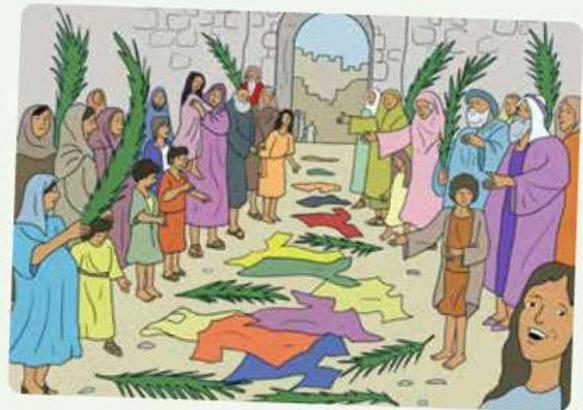
Jesus and his disciples were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives. They were almost near enough to hear the noise of the pilgrim crowds in the city.

Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead, and they went, his surprising words echoing in their minds. He had said, 'Go into the next village, and as soon as you enter it, you will find tied up a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. If anyone asks you what you are doing, just say, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately."' *

So they went off and found a colt in the street, tied up near a door. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' They told them what Jesus had said, and they allowed them to take it. Then the disciples brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks on it and he sat on the animal.

There was a crowd of people and many of them spread their cloaks * out on the road in front of Jesus, while others laid down leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And these pilgrims sang their ancient song:

'Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!' *



And in these words, they heard the cries of the prophets of old. Then Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. He looked around at everything, and as it was late, he went to spend the night at Bethany with his twelve disciples.

Mark 11.1-11

Now let's sing again; **keep on walking**

Keep on walking when the path is rough,
Keep on walking when your life gets tough,
Keep on walking when you've had enough,
Keep on walking with Jesus!

Steve Morgan-Gurr 250 children's songs (praise and worship) 138 copyright 2001 Kingsway's Thankyou Music.

Let's talk about our Bible verses

In our bible verses today, we see Jesus preparing and then going into Jerusalem, where the people welcomed him as a King. Today is known as Palm Sunday because of the palm branches that the people laid down in the road before Jesus as he entered the city. It could just as easily have been named 'cloak Sunday', or coat Sunday', as the people also laid down their own cloaks in front of Jesus too.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves, before Jesus went into Jerusalem, he needed to prepare, and he did this by asking two of his disciples to go ahead of him and borrow a colt, which is a young donkey. But why?

Jesus had become well known by this time, news about how he had brought his friends' brother Lazarus back to life and healed many others, had spread around the towns and cities, and people were starting to believe that Jesus may be the saviour they had been waiting for. A new king who would save them from the Romans perhaps?

Jesus knew the way people had started to talk about him, and so he chose a donkey to ride into Jerusalem, as a sign to the people that he was not rich, and not the fighting soldier that some of them might be thinking he was.

But the people still welcomed him into the city. They laid palm branches and their coats as a sign that they would support him, giving anything they had – cloaks were expensive items of clothing! And they shouted out "Hosanna", which means "Help us, save us", they really wanted to believe that Jesus was the one they had waited for. Had they got it wrong?

Jesus was the one they had waited for, but they misunderstood. Jesus would save them and help them, but not by overthrowing their current government. They were looking at things from their own situations and difficulties, and couldn't see the bigger picture. Jesus hadn't come to save the people from the romans, but to save us all from ourselves. God had had this plan in mind since the beginning, when Adam and Eve spoilt his plan in the garden of Eden. Now God was going to put things right, so that everyone could again be friends with God without the barrier of wrong things, sin, that had stopped people from being able to commune with God. So, Jesus kept on into Jerusalem, knowing that he was facing his biggest challenge yet, he heard the people shouting "Hosanna, save us" and Jesus knew that that was exactly what he was going to do.

Let's talk to God:

Loving God,

The Easter story is difficult for us to understand. Help us to stop looking inward at our own problems and to start looking outwards at your big plan for your world. We want to be a part of that plan. Help us to know what it is you want us to do. Give us the strength and courage to go through with it and to spread your good news of God's love to the people we meet.

Amen.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hold out hands as if expecting a present)

And the love of God (Put your hands on your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Hold hands)

Be with us all now and for ever. Amen! (raise hands together on the Amen)

The children's activity sheet from roots:

<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/media/22105/28-march-2021-activity-sheet.pdf>