

The Donkey and the King

The triumphal entry

Matthew 21:1-11; John 12:16-19; Luke 19:36-40

Character Trait: Gentleness

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recognize the ways the crowd responded to Jesus as He entered Jerusalem on a donkey.
- Children will explain how choosing to be gentle towards others honors God.
- Children will identify two specific ways to show gentleness towards others, one way with words and one way through actions.

Supplies:

- *The Donkey and the King* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- Strips of green paper *(nine for each child)*
- Glue
- Green paper *(optional, one piece for each child)*
- Scissors *(optional)*
- Pens and/or pencils *(optional)*
- Adhesive dots or double-sided tape *(optional)*

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children.

SAY: How do you show that you are happy to see someone? *(Allow a few volunteers to share aloud. Answers will vary but may include smiling, waving, and using words to express excitement.)*

SAY: Today, we will learn how a whole crowd of people reacted when they saw Jesus and recognized that He was the Savior they had been waiting for!

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following:

- **What did the younger son do with all the money?** *(He wasted all of the money.)*
- **How did the father respond when the younger son returned home?** *(The father was happy and overjoyed. He ran to him and hugged him. The father was so happy that he planned a celebration.)*
- **Jesus told this story to teach others about God's love for us. What does this story tell you about God's love and how He responds when we turn to Him?** *(Answers will vary but should include that God loves us like the father loved the younger son. When we turn away from our wrongdoings and turn to God, He rejoices and celebrates.)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *The Donkey and the King* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- It was Passover time.
- Jerusalem was filled with people.
- When Jesus reached the Mount of Olives, a hill overlooking Jerusalem, He told two of His disciples to find a donkey.
- They found the donkey and put their cloaks on it.
- Jesus rode on the donkey, fulfilling the Bible verse that says, "Here comes your King, Jerusalem, riding on a donkey."
- Jesus rode the donkey down to Jerusalem.
- Many people remembered His miracles and joined Him.
- They put cloaks and palm branches on the road before Him to honor Him.
- They hoped that Jesus was God's promised Savior.
- So they shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"
- "The whole world is following Him," the Pharisees grumbled. "Tell them to be quiet, Jesus!"
- "Even if everyone stopped shouting," Jesus replied, "the stones would still praise Me!"

Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **What Bible verse did Jesus fulfill when He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey?** *("Here comes your King, Jerusalem, riding on a donkey.")*
- **What did the people do when they saw Jesus riding on the donkey?** *(They remembered the miracles He did and put their cloaks and palm branches on the road before Him to honor Him.)*
- **What did the people say?** *("Hosanna!" "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!")*
- **The Pharisees were not happy. They told Jesus to quiet the crowd of people. What did Jesus say to them?** *("Even if everyone stopped shouting, the stones would still praise Me!")*

SAY: The crowd of people showed honor to Jesus by singing, shouting, and laying palm branches and their cloaks on the road before Him. When they saw Jesus, they remembered everything He had done and recognized that He was the Savior they had been waiting for. Jesus is our Savior, and we can sing His praises, too!

God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Where Jesus is, God is. Jesus brings God's power. He fulfilled promises that God had made to His people, too. This proves that Jesus is the King of Israel, the promised Savior!

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

"Tell *(cup hands around your mouth)* **the people of Jerusalem,**
'Look *(place hand over your brow and look around)*,
your King *(pretend to place a crown on your head)* **is coming to you.**
He is humble *(fold hands together on chest and bow your head)*,
riding on a donkey—riding on a donkey's colt *(pretend to hold a rope with both hands)*.'"

Matthew 21:5 (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

Designate one area *(or corner of the room)* as "true" and another area *(or corner)* as "false." Explain that you will make statements about the Bible story. The children are to run to the area *(or corner)* based on whether the statement is "true" or "false." For statements that are false, call on a volunteer to point out *(or correct)* what was false. Use the sample statements provided below or create your own:

- **Jerusalem was empty at Passover time.** *(False)*
- **Jesus told two of His disciples to find a horse.** *(False)*
- **Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.** *(True)*
- **Jesus fulfilled the Bible verse that says, "Here comes your King, Jerusalem, riding on a donkey."** *(True)*
- **The Pharisees were happy that all the people was praising and following Jesus.** *(False)*
- **The Pharisees told Jesus to tell the people to be quiet.** *(True)*
- **Jesus said that even if the people stopped, the stones would praise Him.** *(True)*

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

Provide each child with nine strips of green paper and a craft stick. Demonstrate how to carefully glue the end of four strips of paper to each side of the craft stick and one strip of paper to the end to form a palm branch. *(One end of the craft stick should be completely empty, providing an area for the children to grasp when waving their palm branches.)*

For younger children...
Make this activity easier for younger children by using adhesive dots or double-sided tape to adhere the paper leaves to the craft sticks.

For older children...
Make this activity more challenging for older children by allowing them to cut their own palm leaves from green paper. Then, demonstrate how to curl the edges of the leaves by partially rolling them around a pen or pencil. Lastly, tell them to write the words from the memory verse on the various leaves of their palm branch: **"Your King is coming...He is humble, riding on a donkey."**

Character Trait: Gentleness

(10 minutes)

SAY: Gentleness means being kind and tender. We can be gentle in our words and actions. Jesus was gentle and strong at the same time when He responded to the Pharisees. Jesus did not yell. He did not get angry. Instead, Jesus gently pointed out the truth: Even the stones would still praise Him!

Encourage the children to think more about gentleness by asking the following:

- **What are some specific examples of how you can be gentle with your actions?** *(Answers will vary but may include being careful when they handle or touch animals or care for younger children.)*
- **What are some specific examples of how you can be gentle with your words?** *(Answers will vary but may include choosing to use kind words and not interrupting others when speaking.)*
- **How can choosing to show gentleness towards others bring honor to God?** *(Answers will vary but should include that God loves everyone, and when we choose to show gentleness towards others, it shows that we care about others like He does.)*



Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Choosing to show gentleness in our words and actions towards others is one of the most important ways we can show that we care about them.

SAY: Think of two ways that you can show gentleness towards others, one way using your words and another through your actions. Then, turn to someone next to you and share. *(Provide a few moments for the children to do this. Then, call on a few volunteers to share aloud. Answers will vary but may include using words that are polite, kind and respectful, and actions that are helpful, encouraging and supportive.)*



Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: The people in Jerusalem remembered all that Jesus had done. They remembered how Jesus had healed the sick, brought the dead back to life, and performed a miracle to feed a hungry crowd of over 5,000 people! When Jesus rode in on the donkey, they recognized that where Jesus is, God is, and they let their words and actions show this. We can do the same today by honoring God with our choices.



Prayer:

(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
How grateful we are to know that You are our Messiah! Help us to show Your love towards others by choosing to be gentle in all we say and do.
Amen.

Notes