



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#E1 - The Messiah Comes
Matthew 21:1-17

PICTURES NEEDED

E1-1 Jesus riding into Jerusalem

REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)
Review questions from the previous Gnosis lesson.
- **The Big Question Review:** Review from the previous Gnosis lesson.
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Review the memory verse from the last regular Gnosis lesson.

LESSON CONTENT

Next Sunday is Easter and we are going to take a break from our study of Genesis to talk about Easter and the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection. The Old Testament has lots of prophecy about the Messiah God promised to the Jewish people.

What does Messiah mean? Messiah means savior.

Who is the Messiah and what did he come to do? Jesus is the Messiah whom God promised to send to Israel to save all people from the punishment of their sins and deliver them from the power of sin itself.

How do we know that Jesus is the Messiah sent by God? Jesus demonstrated through his teachings and the miracles he performed that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. But it is through his resurrection that we celebrate at Easter that we know without a doubt that he is the Son of God.

Jesus also fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about the promised Messiah. During Christmas we studied prophecies that told about the birth of the Messiah and then saw how Jesus fulfilled these prophecies.

What were the five important prophecies about the Messiah that Jesus fulfilled?

1. **Jeremiah 23:5** says that the Messiah would be from the line of King David who was the greatest king of Israel and a man after God's own heart. Jesus was descended from David.
2. **Isaiah 7:14** says that a virgin, a woman who has never been married and hadn't had relations with a man, would give birth to a son. The baby was to be named Immanuel which means "God with us," implying that God would come in the flesh to dwell among men. Mary, Jesus' mother was a virgin and Jesus is the Son of God who came to dwell among men.
3. **Micah 5:2** says that the Messiah would come from the insignificant little town of Bethlehem. The origins of the Messiah would be ancient as God has always existed and was there at creation. Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem.
4. **Isaiah 9:6-7** says that the Messiah would be born as a man but the names by which he would be called tell us that he is God. Jesus was the son of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. He had no earthly father as he was the Son of God.
5. **Malachi 4:5-6** says that before the Messiah came God would send the prophet Elijah to turn hearts back to him and restore right relationships within families. Scripture makes it clear that John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy. He came before Jesus to prepare the way and make hearts ready for the Messiah.

Today is Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday marks the beginning of the last week of Jesus' Life. Why is it called Palm Sunday? It is called Palm Sunday because in the account of it in the Gospel of John, John says that the people took palm branches as they went to meet Jesus coming into Jerusalem.

The account we are going to read today is from the Gospel of Luke. The account begins with Jesus sending two of his disciples into Jerusalem to get a colt for him to ride on.

Luke 19:29-40 (picture E1-1)

²⁹As (Jesus) approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ³⁰"Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.' "

³²Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

³⁴They replied, "The Lord needs it."

³⁵They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. ³⁶As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ³⁸"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

⁴⁰"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

What did Jesus tell two of his disciples to do? Go find a colt that was tied where they would enter the village.

What happened when they did that? Everything was just the way Jesus said it would be.

What does that reveal about Jesus? Because he is God Jesus had understanding of all things that were going to happen.

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem also fulfilled Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah from Zechariah 9:9. *9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

What is unusual about this prophecy in terms of what a king would normally do? A king wouldn't normally ride a donkey. He would ride a regal horse.

Why do you think Jesus entered the city riding humbly on a donkey rather than triumphantly on a horse? Jesus came as a humble servant to bring people back into a right relationship with God and save them from their sins. He wanted them to see their personal need for a savior.

How did the people receive Jesus when he entered Jerusalem? Because Jesus had been performing miracles and teaching the people throughout the countryside for three years, the people were all excited about him coming to Jerusalem. Many of them wanted to honor him like a king so they took off their cloaks and laid them on the ground while others cut down palm branches and then spread them out on the road. The people were all gathered around him shouting: (Matthew 21:9) "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

Hosanna means "save" in the language that the people spoke and they shouted it as both a form of praise and a prayer.

Why did they call Jesus the Son of David? That was the term that the Jewish people used to talk about the promised Messiah (Savior) that God was going to send, as the Messiah would be from the line of David. It seems that as Jesus was entering the city the people could see who Jesus was and were giving him the praise and honor that he deserved. That would quickly change, however, because in just a few days the crowd of people would be shouting something very different

How did the Pharisees respond to what the people were doing? They told Jesus to rebuke the people. They wanted Jesus to make them stop, as they didn't like the implication of what the people were doing.

What does rebuke mean? Correct sharply.

What does that reveal about the Pharisees? They didn't acknowledge Jesus' authority. They were blind to who Jesus was and wanted him to correct the people and say he wasn't the king.

What did Jesus mean when he said that if the people wouldn't praise him then the stones would cry out? If the people didn't acknowledge him as Lord then another part of his creation would. He would in some way be acknowledged for being God.

The people in greeting Jesus were using the words from Psalm 118: 26-27 to praise Jesus and were also doing what it said. ²⁶ *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you.* ²⁷ *The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine upon us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.*

Do you know what they would be shouting later that same week? They would go from praising Jesus to wanting the officials to hang him on a cross and crucify him.

What does that tell you about crowds of people? Crowds of people are easily influenced and follow whatever seems to be the feeling of the moment. They are fickle.

What should we learn from that? We shouldn't follow the crowd. We should know and understand the Bible and follow what God says rather than what other people are doing.

What kind of savior were the people looking for? The people wanted a worldly king who would save them from the oppression of the Romans who occupied their land. They knew the power Jesus had and thought he could overcome their Roman rulers. They were focused on their outside circumstances, not on their own hearts and their need to be made right.

The things that happened to Jesus were spoken about in the Old Testament long before his birth. As Jesus taught his disciples during the time he was with them, he also told them what would happen to him. He wanted them to understand who he was and be prepared for his death.

A lot of what Jesus said to them they didn't understand until after he rose from the grave. Jesus wanted his followers to be firm in their faith and stand against the wrong ideas people believed about him. His disciples, in turn, have taught us through the words they wrote down. John wrote (1 John 1:2), *"The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us."*

We, too, can stand firm in our faith and not follow the crowds down the wrong path. We can see Jesus for who he really is, our Lord and King who has delivered us from both the power and penalty of our sin, bringing us into eternal life with our heavenly Father.

Because we know Jesus is our Lord and Savior we can also shout, *"Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"*

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** How did Jesus enter Jerusalem? How did the people respond to him? Why did they do this? What did the Jewish leaders say to Jesus?
- **Thought Questions:** Why was it important for Jesus to enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey? Why were the people praising Jesus as he entered the city? Why would their attitude be different toward him at the end of the week? What does their change of heart toward Jesus tell you about people? Does your heart toward things change? How? Does God's heart toward you ever change? Explain. Why is it important to understand who Jesus is?
- **Prayer:** Thank Jesus that he is your Lord and Savior. Pray that your heart would remain faithful to him and that you would learn to praise him more. Thank him for his great love and faithfulness and for coming to earth as a man to save you and bring you into a right relationship with your Heavenly Father.
- **The Big Question:** How did Jesus fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah?
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse:** Zechariah 9:9 Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey.

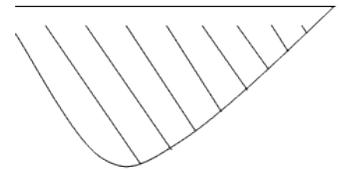
"Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Question: What did Zechariah say about the Messiah? How does that prophecy describe what Jesus did?

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Have the children answer the two questions individually or as a group. What did you learn from this lesson? How can you put into practice what you learned?
- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.
- ★ **Activity Page:** Maze
Instructions: Follow Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem.
- ★ **This Week's Big Question:** Have the students fill in the blanks for the way the memory verse answers the big question.
Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey.



- ★ **Coloring Page:** Color the lesson picture.
- **Craft:** Palm branches
As a reminder of how the people greeted Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem, cut out palm branches.
Materials: bright green paper, paint stick or 2x 18" piece of cardboard folded lengthwise in half, scissors, glue sticks, masking tape
Preparation: Run off Easter craft 1 on green paper. Cut handles from cardboard. Score along line to fold.
Instructions: Fold paper in half and cut out the palm frond. Glue the paint stick or cardboard to the inside of the frond to strengthen it and make a handle. If you used the cardboard strip then wrap masking tape around the handle part.
- **Game:** Cloak relay
As a reminder that the people laid down their cloaks for Jesus to ride over, have a cloak relay.
Instructions: Divide the group into relay teams. Give each team two dish towels or t-shirts to use as cloaks. Each player must lay down a "cloak" to step on each time he moves a foot and pick up the one he steps off of. Once a player reaches the finish line he can pick up his cloaks and run back to his team, giving them to the first person in line to start again. First team to have all players finish wins.

JOURNAL

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six poetic readings and related Bible verses. It would be beneficial for the teacher to read through and be familiar with its content.