God’s Big Story: Hail to the King

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| scripture focus |
| Luke 19:28-40, Mark 11:1-11, John 12:1-8 |

big picture

On Palm Sunday, we announce Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem as King – but not the kind of militaristic king the people expected, sweeping in with pomp and circumstance, defeating the Romans, and restoring Israel to power. Jesus entered Jerusalem not on a warhorse ready for battle, but on a donkey – fulfilling a prophecy from Zechariah 9:9 in which the Lord is portrayed as a humble king seated on a donkey who stops wars and proclaims peace to the nations. Instead of receiving valuable gifts from dignitaries, he is anointed with perfume by a woman with a dubious past. Jesus is not denying that he is king, nor is he refusing the praise of the people – but he is showing that he is a very different kind of king and savior than the one the people expect. This will become more and more clear as he moves towards his final hour of crucifixion.

|  | storybooks | bible readings |
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| read aloud | *Any Children’s Bible:* Palm Sunday story  *Jesus Storybook Bible:* “Washed with Tears”, p.280-285 | Luke 19:28-40; Mark 11:1-11 (Triumphal entry)  John 12:1-8; Luke 7:36-50  Zechariah 9:9-10 |
| discuss/ ask | Talk about kings or queens you know from books or movies or TV. What do they look like? Who are they attended by? If they were to officially return to the main city of their kingdom, how do you think they would enter it? What would they ride? How was Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem different? Why?  What do you think the people wanted Jesus to do as king in Jerusalem? Why were they cheering? What would you want a powerful ruler to do in your own country to make things right?  Instead of receiving precious gifts from important people, King Jesus let an unimportant woman anoint him with perfume and her own tears. Why do you think she was crying? Why did her actions make other people upset?  What would you do to show Jesus that you loved him? | |
| do together | Look for videos of Queen Elizabeth “Trouping the Colour”, seated on a grand horse (or a fancy car) and attended by troops and often a flyover (not the military symbols). Contrast that with Jesus on a donkey with palm branches. Why do you think a king or queen would want to look proud and powerful instead of humble?  Make simple palm branches with green washi tape (there are also many templates available online) and write on them the things that you want to praise Jesus for. Make a “road” on the floor with masking tape. Shout “Hosanna” and throw the palm branches & jackets down on the ground (bonus for having a parent act as a donkey for a child taking the part of Jesus). | |