

Palm Sunday 2008

Revealed At Last: The Messiah

Scripture Text: John 11:38-53; 12:12-19

Memory Passage: “When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord” (John 12:12-13).

POWer line: I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah

Supplies

- ✓ green (and other colors) construction paper
- ✓ *Kids in Praise I and II* CDs
- ✓ recording of “Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord”
- ✓ posterboard, transparency, or PowerPoint of words to songs
- ✓ whiteboard and markers
- ✓ Bibles
- ✓ pens
- ✓ biblical costumes
- ✓ reporter’s notebook and pen

Before the Session

Praise Generators: Write the words to the songs on large posterboard or transparency for overhead projector. *Kids in Praise I and II* CDs can be purchased from Pentecostal Publishing House. Obtain a recording of “Open the

Eyes of My Heart, Lord.”

Truth Conductor: Write facts about Jesus on slips of paper.

Illustrated Sermon: Make sure you will have sufficient volunteers for the Bible story. Recruit adults if necessary. Provide costumes and props. Arrange for a practice. A copy of the script can be attached to Cubbie’s notebook since he has the most lines.

POWER of Worship

Welcome (6-8 minutes)

As students enter direct them to make palm fronds out of the green construction paper and to choose another color of construction paper and draw/create something (a toy, piece of clothing, a pet) that has great personal value to them. Encourage them to be creative, but not exact, as the personal item does not need to be a work of art to convey what it represents.

Praise Generators (5-6 minutes)

Play “All Ye Children” and “Woke Up This Morning” from *Kids in Praise* / CD. Provide the words so children can sing along.

Enlist a few children to be praise singers.

Truth Conductor (3-4 minutes)

Today’s POWER line is I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah. Ask the students to repeat this line.

One of the saddest parts of today’s story is that many people did not

recognize that Jesus was the Messiah. “Messiah” means “the anointed king” or expected deliverer for the Jewish people. (Remember: they had been ruled by other countries for over 600 years at this point.) So when Jesus, the Messiah, arrived, many people did not recognize Him for who He is. The Jewish people were looking for a king or ruler who would vanquish their enemies. Jesus was not what they were looking for. Sometimes people today have the same trouble.

How many of you know what a police lineup is? Wait for answers.

To protect a witness and the rights of the accused, the police put someone suspected of a crime in a lineup with other individuals with similar characteristics—height, weight, complexion—in hopes that the witness will point out the suspected criminal.

Today, we have a Messiah lineup. Recruit volunteers to line up, face front with each saying, “I am the Messiah.” **Can anyone tell me which person in our lineup is the Messiah?** Allow the students to guess.

How can we tell if one of them is the Messiah? Is it how he dresses? Is it what he says? Is it how smart he is? Is it his last name? Is it what church he goes to? Ask the students to voice their criteria.

Ultimately, people knew Jesus was the Messiah because the Word of God explained what to expect when the Messiah arrived, and secondly because Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures with His actions and attitude.

Pass out prepared slips of paper that list facts about Jesus. Ask students to read the facts out loud.

- ✓ The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1).

- ✓ The Messiah would heal the sick (Isaiah 53:5).

Jesus healed all manner of sickness and disease (Matthew 9:35).

- ✓ The Messiah would save people from their sins (Isaiah 53:12). Jesus forgave sins (Matthew 9:2) and died on the cross for our sins (Matthew 27:38).

That is how we can also say, "I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah."

Because the Word of God said it in the Old Testament and Jesus did it in the New Testament.

I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah. Ask the students to repeat this line.

Prayer (3-5 minutes)

Play the song "Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord." Ask the students to put their hands over their eyes as the song plays and to make the song their prayer.

Offering (2-3 minutes)

Mention that our Bible story will cover how people who lived in the time of Christ gave to Him. **Now is our chance to give to Jesus. The money we give today will help to spread the news that Jesus is the Messiah.**

Ask the students to march to the front and put their offerings in the offering plate. Encourage students to march even if they do not have any money with them.

POWER of the Word

Bible Memorization (8-10 minutes)

Ask students to find John 12:12-13 in their Bibles. Most people memorize better through visual association, so help your students with these verses. You can draw or ask one (or several) students to draw the symbols on the board.

Let's memorize these verses by breaking each phrase down to a simple drawing on the whiteboard. Write the verse out on one side of the whiteboard (see column below). Then read the entire verse out loud together. Start the verse, ask the students to repeat it, then get someone to draw the first symbol. (He can make his own symbol or take the suggestion in the Cartoon Symbol column below.) Continue with this until all the symbols are drawn. Quote the verse together, then slowly remove the words and just leave the symbols until everyone quotes it. Then spot check the students or ask several children to lead everyone in the quoting.

Verse

When they heard
that Jesus
was coming to Jerusalem,
took branches of palm trees,
and went forth to meet him,
and cried,
Hosanna: Blessed is the King
of Israel

Cartoon Symbol

multiple ears
Jesus (smiley face)
silhouette of buildings
palm leaves
stick figures and face of Jesus
multiple open mouths
crown
Star of David

that cometh

stick figure walking

in the name of the Lord.”

name tag (Hello, my name is)

NOTE: Do not erase these symbols, as they will be used later in a review game.

Spirit Generator (2-3 minutes)

Post the words to “Shout to the Lord with Praise” from the *Kids in Praise II* CD and lead the children in singing.

Illustrated Sermon (10-12 minutes)

The reporter and editor enter from the side.

Editor: If you don't find me a story quick, I'm gonna fire you from this newspaper, Cubbie.

Cubbie: But Chief! I've looked high and low. Nothing ever happens around here!

Lazarus, once dead, now alive, dances through the kids from the back in total joy, shouting and singing.

Lazarus: I'm alive! I was dead, but now look at me! He dances about in joy.

I'm alive! Jesus did it! He grabs Cubbie by the shoulders and shakes. **I'm**

alive! I'm alive! Runs off shouting. Stays in the background as other actors

come on the scene.

Cubbie: Well, he may be alive, but I'm gonna be dead if I don't find a story for the paper! Who was that strange guy anyway?

Editor: **That wasn't a strange guy; that was Lazarus! I went to his funeral last week! Chase him down, Cubbie! Find out who this Jesus is that he spoke of. Get this story!**

Cubbie: **Yes sir, Chief! I'm on it!** Cubbie chases Lazarus and the editor walks off, while you enter.

Teacher: **Today is Palm Sunday. Something amazing happened today, and it all started with Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead about one week ago. After this, many people said, "I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed king, the deliverer."** However, not everyone was happy about it.

Pharisees enter from the other side.

Cubbie: **So, Mr. Pharisee, Sir, I'm wondering how you feel about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead?**

Mr. Pharisee 1: **It's outrageous! If this keeps up, more people will believe on Jesus!**

Cubbie: **Ummm, and that's a bad thing?**

Mr. Pharisee 2: **It's horrible! If all the people believe He is the king and follow Him, the Roman Empire could crush us like bugs! Thousands might die.**

Cubbie: **That *is* a bad thing. But if Jesus is the Messiah, wouldn't thousands be saved by believing on Him? Couldn't He defeat the Roman Empire?**

Mr. Pharisee 1: **We can't take anymore of your questions. It's time for us to attend the "How-can-we-kill-Jesus?" meeting.** Pharisees walk off.

Cubbie: **I don't think I like the sound of that.** Cubbie walks off.

Teacher: **Sure enough, the Pharisees wouldn't recognize the Messiah even when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. In fact, later on they conspired to kill Lazarus also (John 12:10-11), because he was proof that Jesus was the Messiah. They would not recognize Jesus as Messiah because it meant they would have to change their selfish habits and submit to Him.**

Cubbie approaches Lazarus.

Cubbie: **So you were dead?**

Lazarus: **Yes.**

Cubbie: **And now you're alive?**

Lazarus: **Yes.**

Cubbie: **Which do you prefer?**

Lazarus: **That's a dumb question.**

Cubbie: **Any changes in your life now that you're back?**

Lazarus: **Well, Mary and Martha sure are treating me better. But the real change is that more people believe Jesus is the Messiah now.**

Cubbie: **Except the Pharisees.**

Lazarus: **Except the Pharisees.**

Teacher: **Then, unexpectedly, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and everyone started praising Him. Jesus enters slowly. They celebrated His holiness and greatness. They celebrated that He was the Savior. They cut down palm branches from nearby trees and put them on the road in front of Jesus. Let's do that now.** Allow all the children with palm branches to lay them down before Jesus.

They also spread their outer garments on the road before the Lord to show their reverence to the Savior. Their actions said, “I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah.” Jesus should stop at a central point of the room.

Now why did they spread out their coats and cloaks before Jesus? Allow some children to guess. Their coats and cloaks were valuable to them, but they wanted to show Jesus He was more important than even their clothes. Look at the valuable item you created on the construction paper. That’s important to you and that’s okay.

However, if Jesus went through your neighborhood like He did through Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, could you offer Him that item? Could you give Him something so valuable knowing you might never get it back? Would He be worth it to you? Could you come up here and say, “Jesus, take this and that’s fine! I don’t need this if I can have You because You’re my Savior! You’re my King of everything!”

Jesus is not asking us to give up things that are important to us—just things that are more important to us than He is. He wants to be the most important thing in our life.

Invitation and Prayer (5-? minutes)

Softly play “All My Days” from *Kids in Praise* CD.

If we believe today’s POWER line—I recognize that Jesus is the Messiah—then we have to recognize that Jesus must be King of everything in our lives. Sometimes, even without meaning to, we get selfish or

distracted. When we recognize that Jesus is the Messiah it changes the way we live, how we act, and what we love.

Let's pray today that He will be Messiah in everything we do and own. If you need to repent—that is, tell Jesus you're sorry for sin in your life and promise to turn from it—then do so now. If you're just prone to be selfish with your toys or clothes or time or friends or money, then make sure you give those to Jesus today. We can all draw closer to Jesus because He is our Messiah.

Review

Game 1: Charades from the Life of Jesus

Split your class into groups (some will need to be two or three people, others more) for Charades from the Life of Jesus. Secretly give each group an event from the life of Jesus, then ask them to practice it together in different parts of the room before they present it to the class in silence. If your class is not familiar with these stories, use stories you know they have studied.

Make sure no one is allowed to guess the story until after they complete it.

- Jesus on Palm Sunday (John 12:12-19)
- Jesus feeding the 5,000 (Matthew 14:15-21)
- Jesus with the woman who gave two mites (Mark 12:41-44)
- Jesus on the mount with Elijah and Moses (Matthew 17:1-9)
- Jesus with the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30)
- Jesus healing blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52)
- Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38-44)

Game 2: Memory Verse Imitations

Bring the white board out front with the memory passage symbols. Ask everyone to quote the verse together and make sure most, if not all, of the students can quote it. Then ask volunteers to come up front; assign them a voice with which to quote the verse to the class. Then give an example of you quoting the verse in a robot's voice.

Other voices to assign:

- a bird's chirp
- a teenage girl's voice
- a sleepy, yawning child's voice
- a suspicious detective's voice
- an opera-singing voice
- a rapper's voice
- a fiery preacher's voice

Next *kids POWer hour*

End this session with an enthusiastic introduction to next week's lesson.