



Jesus Enters Jerusalem as King

Matthew 21–23; Zechariah 9:9



LESSON GOAL

Students will recognize that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- The crowds treated Jesus as the promised King.
- Jesus rode into Jerusalem as one bringing peace.
- Jesus was angry with the temple priests for stealing the people's money.

KEY VERSE

“Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey’” (Matthew 21:5).

APPLICATION

- Be faithful to obey Jesus as King.
- Sincerely worship Him as Lord.
- Tell others about the Messiah.

NEXT WEEK

Judas Betrays Jesus
Read Matthew 26:1–19, 36–50.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Matthew wrote his Gospel to show that Jesus Christ was Israel’s long-awaited King and Messiah. Matthew, also known as Levi, was one of the 12 apostles. He was a Jewish tax collector before he was called to follow Christ. Throughout his Gospel, Matthew quotes Old-Testament prophetic passages more than 60 times. His goal was to demonstrate to his readers that Jesus Christ fulfilled these messianic prophecies. He also recorded Jesus’ teachings and miracles as clear evidence of His deity.

Overview of Matthew 21–23

The Passover was about a week away. Many people (possibly over two million) from all over Israel, and from outside of the country as well, traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate. Jesus’ earthly ministry was almost over, and the time for Him to be crucified was very close. The last week of His life began with a special trip into Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel. Chapter 21 begins on the Sunday of the last week of Jesus’ ministry. He rode on a donkey into Jerusalem and was proclaimed as the Messiah. On Monday, Jesus cleansed the temple of the money changers. Tuesday, He went back to the temple and preached about the kingdom of God. He was crucified on Friday and rose from the dead on Sunday.

The Presentation of the Messiah

Matthew records the presentation of the Messiah in 21:1–22. The section begins with Jesus asking two of His disciples to get a donkey and its colt. For Jesus to ride a colt would be a fulfillment of the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9, which says, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.” This spoke of the nation’s king riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Riding a colt in this manner was a sign of peace. Here, Jesus was officially presented to the people as the Messiah. Many among the attending crowds probably were visitors from Galilee on their way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Many were aware of the many miracles that Jesus had done there. The people were shouting Psalm 118:26: “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD,” and, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” meaning “Save us now, we pray, Son of David.” The people acknowledged Jesus’ messianic claim. Those who did not know who Jesus was asked, “Who is this?” They were told, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee” (Matt. 21:10–11). The phrase “prophet from Nazareth of Galilee” referred to the one who was promised by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15.

The Confrontation with the Messiah

In 21:23, Jesus came back to the temple the day after chasing out the money changers, and the chief priests and the elders confronted Him. They asked, “By what

Additional Reference Materials

The Murder of Jesus by John MacArthur

The MacArthur Study Bible by John MacArthur

authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?" They were referring to His entering the city, accepting the praises from the people, driving out the money changers, healing the people, and claiming the authority to call Himself the Messiah. Instead of answering their questions, He asked them a question and told them three parables. The first parable was of the two sons and the vineyard. The second was the parable of the landowner. And the third was the parable of the marriage feast. Jesus applied the parables to the religious leaders and the nation of Israel.

The parable of the two sons and the vineyard taught that some may say they believe, but their actions do not reflect their words. The chief priests and elders were very offended when Jesus said that there would be tax collectors and prostitutes in the kingdom of God, but not the religious leaders who did not repent. The parable of the landowner demonstrated the nation's response to His ministry. The religious leaders were equated with men who did not faithfully acknowledge the master's right over the land and killed the landowner's messengers (prophets), and even his own son (Jesus). The eventual result would be that the master would bring judgment on them and new tenants would be put over the vineyard.

The third parable (22:1–14) was about a wedding feast. The invited guests refused to come to the wedding banquet. The servants went out and personally encouraged the guests to come. Some of the servants were abused and even killed by those invited. The original guests rejected the invitation, so the invitation went out to a broader group of both good and bad people. Each person invited was required to wear the wedding garment, which was an illustration of individual preparation of each guest.

This section closes with Jesus questioning the Pharisees. Since they no longer asked Him any questions, Jesus turned the tables and asked them a question: "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They answered, "The Son of David." Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1, where David refers to the Messiah as "LORD," a name that was used only in reference to God. The Messiah was more than just the Son of David; He was also deity. The Pharisees were left speechless. If they answered, they would have to admit that Jesus was deity.

The Rejection of the Messiah (Matt. 23)

This chapter is where everything comes to a climax. Jesus did not mince words. He called the Pharisees hypocrites and condemned them for the wrong message that they taught and modeled. He condemned them for their traditions and rituals, which only confused men and caused them to stray from the truth. He called them "whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness" (23:27). This clearly illustrated the condition of the Pharisees' hearts. Jesus quoted the Pharisees as saying "If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets" (23:20). Jesus knew that they were, even at that time, already plotting His death. Jesus clearly revealed the true motives and hearts of the religious leaders of Israel. Their secret was out, and their authority was challenged. Israel's leaders had rejected the Messiah. He was not the coming King they were expecting. They were not willing to turn to the Lord.

The one who accepts Jesus as King does not simply obey rules, but has a relationship with Him. Matthew presented Jesus as the promised Messiah who confronted the sin of the Sadducees and the Pharisees. Jesus wants an obedient relationship, not an external religion. After seeing His holiness, love, and miracles, a person is forced to accept Him as King and Savior or reject Him. We must ask ourselves, "Is my salvation based on what I do, or is it based on my relationship with Christ? Am I like the Pharisees, who looked great on the outside but were spiritually dead on the inside?"

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth"
(Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Good King, Bad King

The Jews had an incorrect expectation of the type of king God promised to send. Ask the students what they think makes a good king and what characterizes a bad king. When their ideas are correct, use them to reinforce the qualities of Christ. If they have incorrect assumptions, explain that the Jewish people also did not understand what made a truly good king. A few examples:

Good King

Loves God
Serves his people
Just
Humble
Kind
Rules by love and example

Bad King

Loves himself
Demands that his people serve him
Unfair
Proud
Harsh
Rules by force



How to Treat a King

In this lesson, Jesus is presented as the Messiah. Here are five ways we will see this in today's lesson.

1. A king rides a colt, a donkey's foal, in times of peace.
2. The disciples laid their garments on the colt where Jesus sat.
3. The multitude spread their garments and palm branches on the road.
4. The crowd went before Him. Those who followed cheered, calling Him Lord.
5. The children were crying out in the temple.

Reenact Jesus entering Jerusalem as king. Choose a student or another teacher to stand quietly as the king. Set up two chairs to be the donkey. (Decorate with a donkey head and tail made of paper or possibly a stick horse.) Have some robes and clothing to lay on the donkey before the king sits. Have the students line up in front of the donkey and make a "parade route." Have them lay out clothing (even their own jackets) and palm branches (from an earlier craft activity). While still in the scene, have the students shout "Hosanna" and sing a song about Jesus.



Palm Branches

Give each student a copy of the palm branch at the back of this lesson. Have them cut out and color the branches. Before lesson time, have the students lay down their palm branches in a row. Explain to them that when Jesus entered Jerusalem, people placed palm branches and clothes on the road. This act showed that the people recognized Jesus as King of the Jews.



Money Changer

Materials: three green slips of paper money for each student; one pink slip of paper money for each student, a sign that says, "Money Changers"; a sign that says, "Crayons"

Directions: Set up two stands in front of the class. The first will be a "Money Changer" stand and the second a "Crayons" stand. As students come into class, give them three slips of green paper with dollar signs on them. Tell them that in a little while they are going to pretend to buy something with this money. When all the students are in the room, tell them that they are supposed to color a picture. But they have to buy the crayons with which to color. Each crayon costs one "dollar." Then tell them that the green money they have is not the right kind of money for this class. They need pink money. Have them stand in a line at the money changer's stand. When they are there, tell them that they can get only one pink dollar for three green dollars. Once they get the pink dollar, they can go to the crayon stand and buy one crayon. Then have them sit down and begin coloring. While they begin coloring, stop the whole class and tell them that it seems unfair that the crayon was so expensive. This was a lot like what the men in the temple in Jesus' day did. They were supposed to buy lambs or doves for a sacrifice, but the priests made them use their money and charged a lot to change it. That made Jesus very angry. Listen to today's lesson and see what happens. Then pull out the regular crayons and have the students finish the picture.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Jesus and His disciples were traveling to the city of Jerusalem. Jesus was riding on a young donkey. When they were near Jerusalem, many Jewish people came to see Jesus. They spread clothes and branches on the road that Jesus was traveling on. The people were excited and shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Do you know what this means? Hosanna means "save us now." The Son of David was someone for whom the Jewish people were waiting, someone who would help them. They also called him the "Messiah." A long time ago, God had told the Jewish people that He would send the Messiah, who is a King and is God Himself. The Messiah would take the punishment for all the bad things that people had done and would save the people. The Jewish people had been waiting a long time for the Messiah, and they were excited to see that He had come. A large crowd of people welcomed Him as He came into the city.

Jesus went into the temple of God. This was God's house, where people went to worship Him. But many people were there buying and selling things. There were also people changing money who did not give the right change back. God was

very upset at these people because they were not honest and made God's house like a place for robbers. Jesus went inside and drove out all the people changing money, buying things, and selling things. The leaders of the Jewish people did not like what Jesus did and did not think the people should honor Him.

Jesus told the people parables. Parables are stories that have a meaning. Jesus told three parables. One of the parables was about two sons. The father asked both sons to work in his vineyard. One son said he would not go, but in the end, he obeyed his father and worked in the vineyard. The second son said he would go, but then he did not go to work. Which son do you think did the right thing? The first son did the right thing because he worked in the vineyard.

What do you think is the meaning of this parable? Jesus said that the first son is like the people who did something wrong, but later were sorry and wanted to obey God, their Father. The first son was wrong when he did not want to obey his father to work in the vineyard. But afterward, he was sorry and obeyed his father to work in the vineyard. Jesus also said that the second son is like the leaders of the Jewish people. They said that they would obey their father but did not do it.

The leaders of the Jewish people were angry at Jesus for the things He did and said. So they decided to trick Him by asking questions that He would not be able to answer. They wanted to show the people that Jesus was not the real Messiah. But Jesus is God, and He knew all their bad thoughts. Thoughts are the things we think about. Being God, Jesus answered all their questions perfectly, and the leaders did not dare to ask Him any more questions.

Jesus then spoke to the people and His disciples about the leaders of the Jewish people. These leaders did things that made them look good in front of other people so that the people would praise them and say how good they were. But inside, they thought of evil things; their thoughts were not pleasing to God. Earlier, they tried to trick Jesus. Jesus called them "whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." A tomb is the place where the Jewish people put a person when he died. Jesus was saying that the leaders looked good on the outside, like tombs that have been washed white and decorated, but inside, the leaders were rotting away like a dead body. God wanted them to be good on the inside as well as the outside.

Prayer

Dear God, we have learned how you hate thoughts that are not good, even if our actions seem good. We ask you to forgive us for any thoughts that are not right. We thank you for being a forgiving God. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Lesson Questions

What did the people say to Jesus when He entered Jerusalem on a colt?
"Hosanna to the Son of David."

Why did Jesus drive out the people in the temple who were changing money, buying, and selling?
The merchants were stealing, not praying.

What did Jesus teach the chief priests and elders using the parables?
The leaders and people of Israel were not obedient to and not willing to serve God. Therefore, God was going to cast them out and bring in a new group that would obey and serve Him.

Why did Jesus condemn the leaders of the Jewish people?
The leaders did good things in front of people, but their thoughts were wicked and not pleasing to God.

Does God care about our thoughts as well as our actions?
Yes.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



Karaoke

Use this idea in worship time or any time in the lesson when you want to remind the students of some of the facts of the story. When Christ entered Jerusalem, the students shouted praises to Him. Let your students worship Him, too. Bring microphones (or any props that could be used as imaginary microphones) and encourage the students to sing to the Lord.



Dead or Alive

Supplies: gift-wrapped box, cardboard skeleton

Instructions: Talk to the students about the prettily-wrapped box, and ask what they think might be inside. Then open the box and pull out the cardboard skeleton. Explain that in today's lesson, they will learn about the men who rejected Jesus. Jesus described them as being concerned with outside appearances, but inside they were full of dead men's bones.

Praise and Worship

Give Me Oil in My Lamp

I Love You, Lord

King of Kings

Praise the Name of Jesus

Shout Hosanna

Trust and Obey



Jesus Presents Himself as King

Jesus was ready to pay for man's sin.
(Point up; then make a cross with fingers.)

He rode on a colt to Jerusalem.
(Pretend to ride donkey.)

There he confronted the elders and priests;
(Wag finger.)

They plotted and questioned His authority.
(*Rub hands together.*)

They were full to the brim with self-righteous pride.
(*Hold hand low; then raise overhead.*)

They thought only of what is on the outside.
(*Point to temple; then tug shirt.*)

But God is concerned with the inward part,
(*Place hand on heart.*)

Loving the Lord with soul, mind, and heart.
(*Hug self.*)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



4
5

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

Materials: copies of the “Jesus' Triumphal Entry” craft page, strips of cloths, scissors, crayons, glue

Directions: Cut out the palm tree, palm branches, and Jesus on the donkey pieces to make a scene of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Have the students follow the steps one by one to make the scene. Review the story while the students do so.

1. Color the ground brown, the sky blue, and the sun yellow.
2. Color and glue the palm tree on the ground.
3. Glue the strips of cloth on the ground toward the bottom of the picture.
4. Color and glue the palm branches beside the strips of cloth.
5. Glue the picture of Jesus and the donkey on the paper so the donkey is standing on the branches and coats.



“Christ Is King”

When Jesus came into Jerusalem, the crowds greeted Him with praise as their Messiah. That means the promised king from the family of David. Have the students color and cut out the crown and jewels at the back of the lesson. Have them glue the jewels above the words on the crown. As you make the craft, ask the students to give examples of how Christ was a prophet, king, and healer. Discuss with them ways He showed that He was holy and humble.



The Donkey That Jesus Rode into Jerusalem

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, He fulfilled the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9. Cut out large palm leaves from construction paper. Cut out another piece in the shape of a coat. Have the students color palm leaves and coats. The palm

leaves, will be laid on the ground with some of the garments. Some of the garments will be placed on the donkey for Jesus to sit on. On the palm leaves, the students may write the words that the people said as they put their coats and palm leaves on the ground for Jesus. Have one of the teachers pretend to be a donkey, and lay some of the garments on his back.

Matthew 21:9b: "Hosanna to the Son of David; 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!"

Coloring Sheets

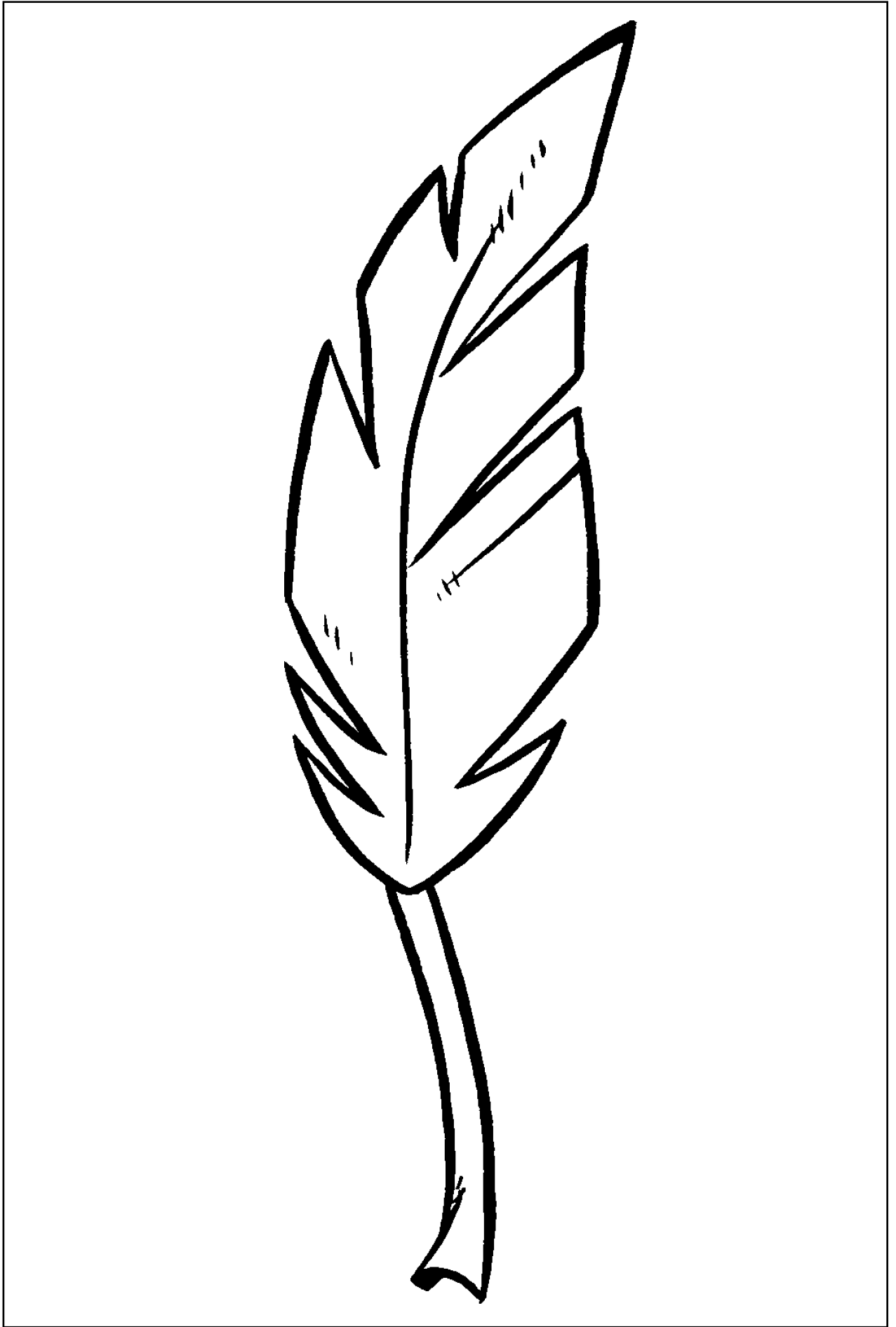
Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



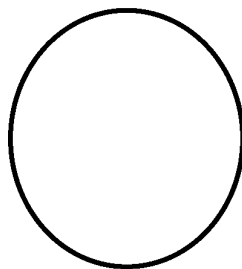
MEMORY VERSE

"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3).

Palm Branch



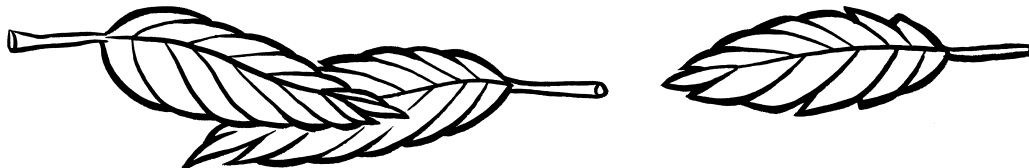
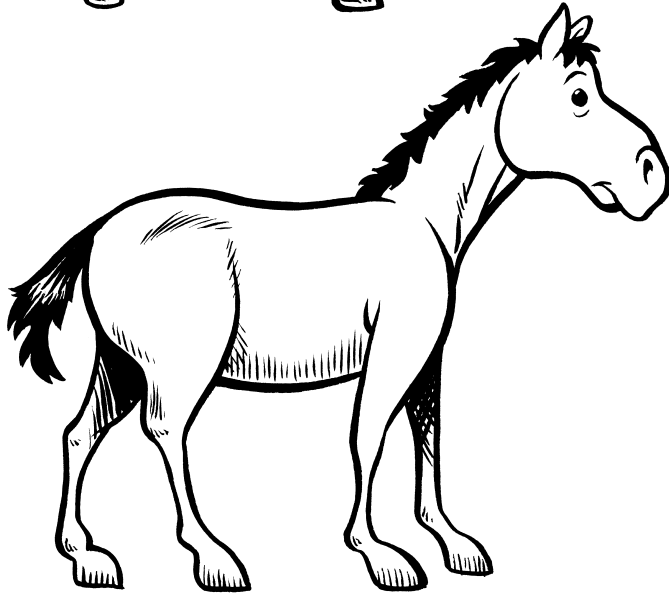
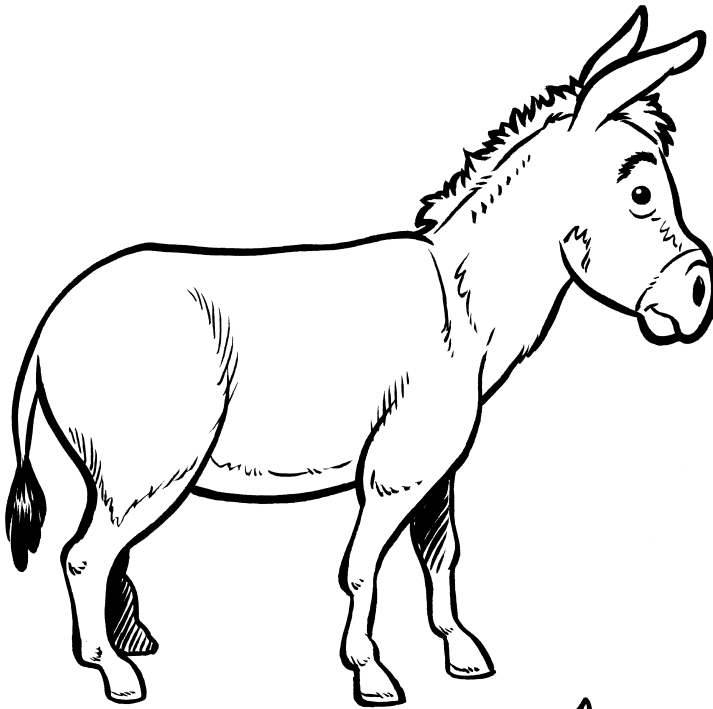
Jesus' Triumphal Entry



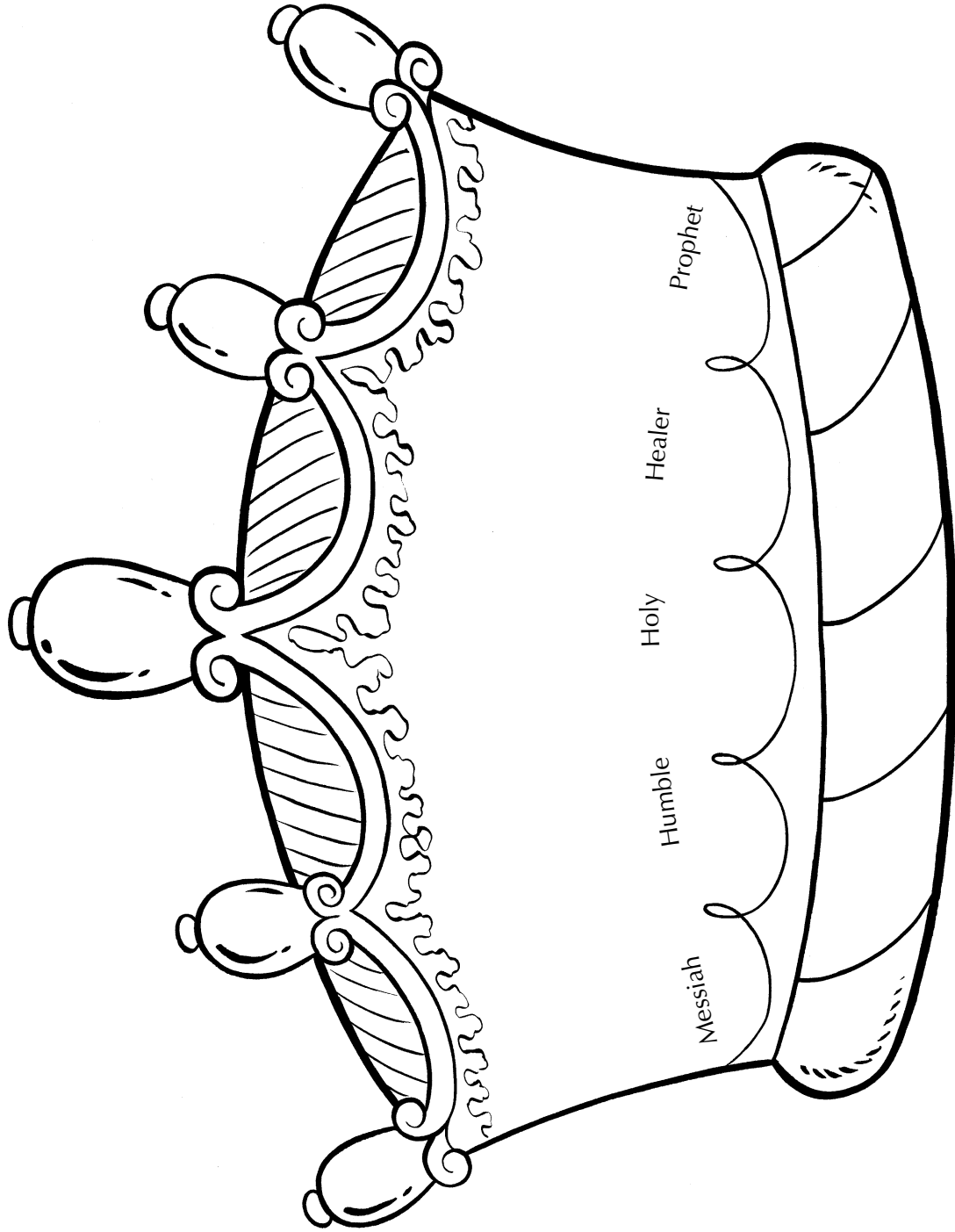
**“Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!”
(Matthew 21:9b).**

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

Cut out the pieces and glue them to the landscape page to recreate the scene of Jesus entering Jerusalem. Glue on small strips of fabric to represent the clothes the people spread on the road.

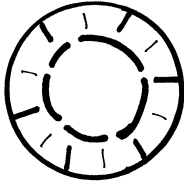
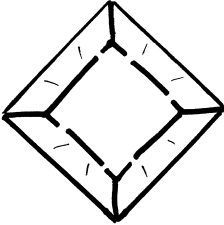
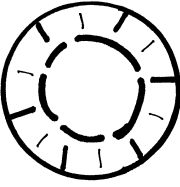
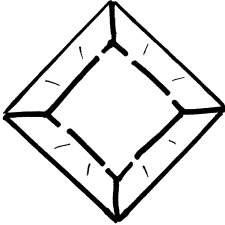
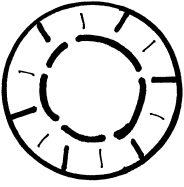
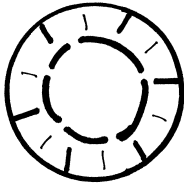
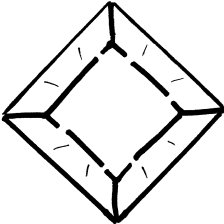
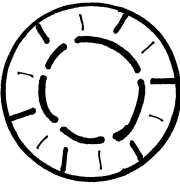
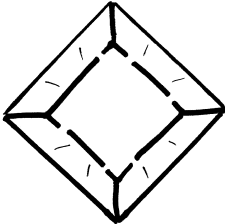
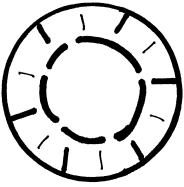
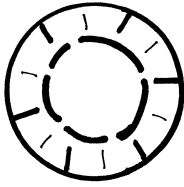
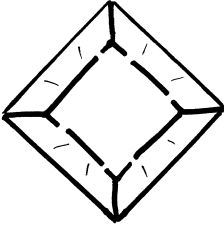
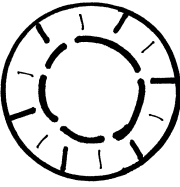
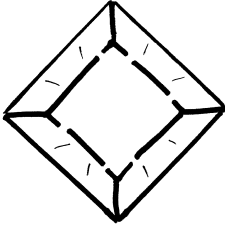
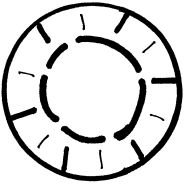
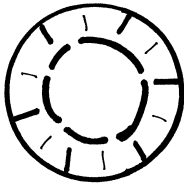
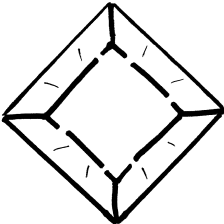
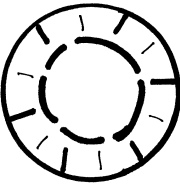
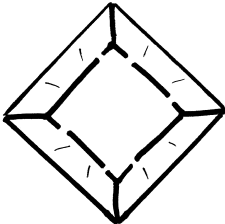
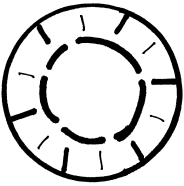
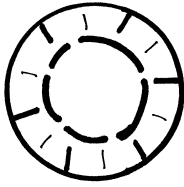
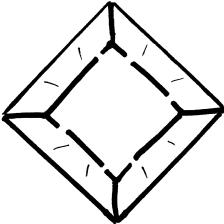
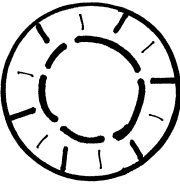
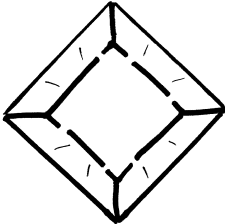
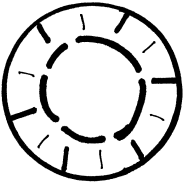


Christ Is King

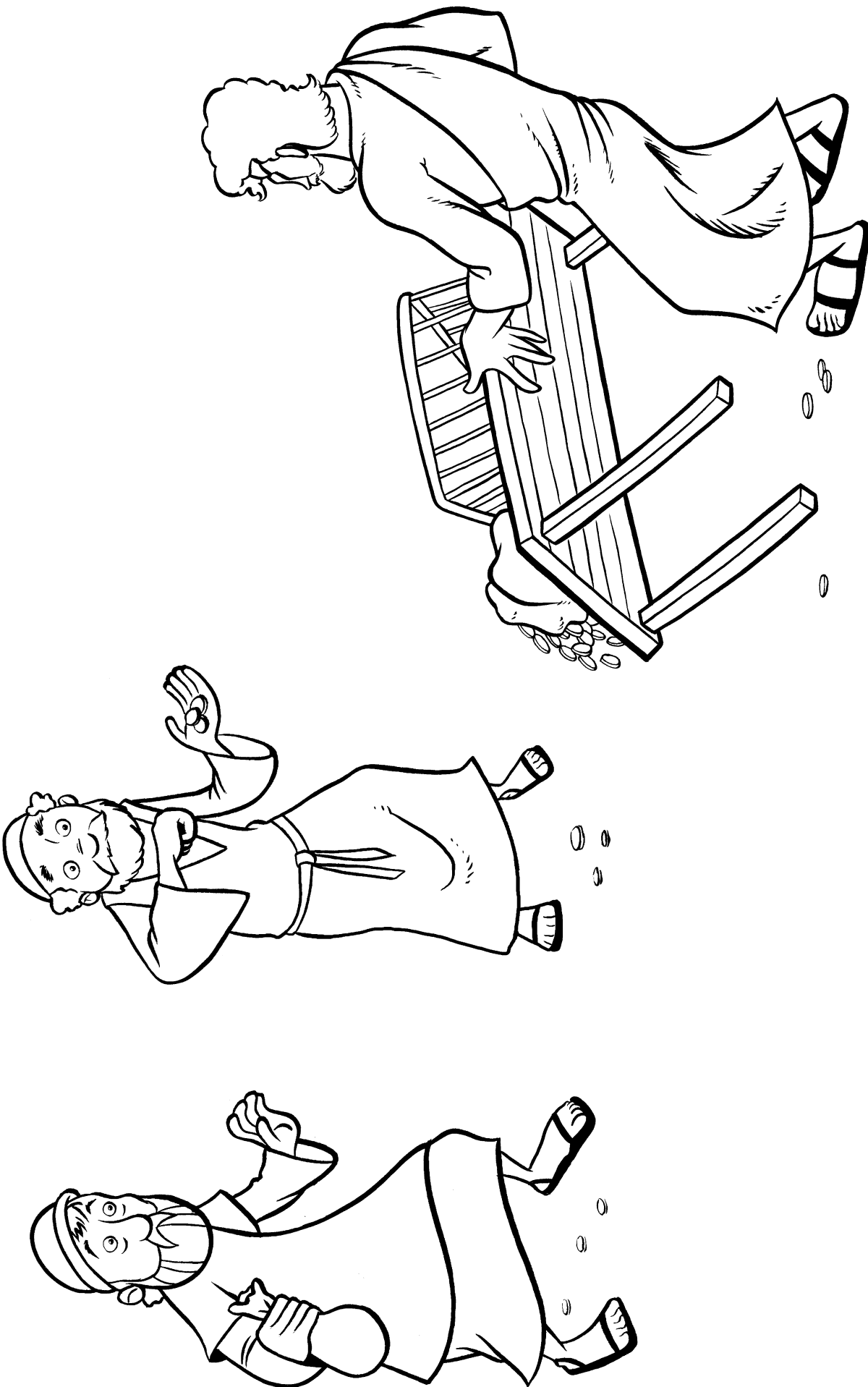


“Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” (Matthew 21:5).

Christ Is King









“Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:9).



“Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves” (Matthew 21:12).

