

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus rises and lifts us up.</p> <p>CROSS YOUR HEART AND HOPE TO FLY: Kids use Kid Pix™ or a similar program to draw a cross in a way that turns it into a lifting device such as stairs, a ladder, a rocket, etc.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Keith Green’s “Easter Song,” MP3 player, speakers</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Computer(s) with access to Kid Pix™ or similar program, printer and paper (optional)</p>
Upper Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus takes the hard road to the cross to save us.</p> <p>THE CROSS AT THE CROSSROADS—CLASS RENDERINGS: Kids create their own crosses using Kid Pix or a similar program.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: YouTube video “Palm Sunday Celebrations in Jerusalem,” laptop or class computer with speakers</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Computer(s) with access to Kid Pix or similar program, printer and paper (optional)</p>
All Kids		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: In living and giving up his life, Jesus gives us life.</p> <p>THE PALM SUNDAY BRUNCH MENU: Older and younger kids team up to create a menu for a Palm Sunday celebration meal for Jesus.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Picture of Roman crosses used for crucifixion</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Computer(s) with access to Microsoft Word™, Kid Pix, or similar programs; printer and paper (optional), paper and pencils (optional)</p>



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation’s story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.

Workshop Focus: Jesus rises and lifts us up.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksundayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday Storytelling

Have your MP3 player and speakers ready. Before class, download Keith Green's "Easter Song" at the link on iTunes listed in supply section. Once you download the song, test it to make sure it plays on your MP3 player. Alternatively, you may purchase the Keith Green CD *For Him Who Has Ears to Hear* from Amazon.com or at a Christian bookstore.

Activity Instructions

Hello, kids! Today we'll learn about the journey Jesus took from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. How many of you think of bunnies when you hear the word Easter? Do you really think bunnies had anything to do with the original Bible story? Let's look at what was part of the story: a celebration with palms, a big supper, and a lot of suffering for Jesus. But guess what? In the end, nothing could hold back Jesus and his love for us—not even death!

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

Keith Green's "Easter Song" from the CD *For Him Who Has Ears to Hear* or downloaded from: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/for-him-who-has-ears-to-hear/id49668796>

MP3 player

Speakers

Pass out Spark Story Bibles. The Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday journey is covered in these stories: Palm Sunday, The Last Supper, Jesus Is Betrayed, Christ the King, The Day Jesus Died, and The Empty Tomb on pages 454-487. Because of the length of these combined passages, select the ones you want to read to the class in the allotted time, or read abridged portions from each. Then play the “Easter Song” by Keith Green.

What did you like about the song? How did the song make you feel? What was your favorite part of the song? What does the song say about Jesus? Accept all answers. **Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead on Easter morning is an important part of our faith and shows how much he loves us.**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Cross Your Heart and Hope to Fly

Set Up: Make sure computer(s) is/are set up to Kid Pix or a similar program that allows kids to make pictures with a computer. If only one computer is available, put kids into teams and have them share it, or have the class perform the activity as a collaborative project.

Activity Instructions

Now that we’ve heard the Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday story, we know how important the cross is. For this activity, you have a chance to imagine the cross as something that has lifting power. What are some things that have lifting power? Accept reasonable answers. **How does the cross have lifting power in our lives?** (*It reminds us of Jesus dying for us. Jesus saved us from our sins so we can go to heaven with him.*) **Draw it as part of stairs, or turn it into a ladder or a rocket—anything you like.** When the images are complete, you can assemble them into a slide show kids can watch, and have kids explain what they drew for the class.

If a printer is available, have kids print out and share their pictures, which can be assembled into a class book.

It was fun to see all of your creative ideas today and how each of you imagined the cross as having lifting power! When Jesus rose up from the dead, he gave us new life.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Computer(s) with access to Kid Pix or similar program
Printer and paper (optional)

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

As we leave today, remember that Jesus lifted us up when he rose to heaven. He's listening to you, looks out for you, and cares for you. He gave up a lot to give us his love!

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Ask kids to gather in a circle. **As I pray, please repeat each line after me.**

Dear God,

From the palms in the street, (echo)

And the shouts of Hosanna! (echo)

To the very last supper, (echo)

And his lonely betrayal, (echo)

Jesus kept walking. (echo)

He never looked back. (echo)

To the cross he kept going. (echo)

He never lost track. (echo)

We thank you for giving (echo)

The gift of your son, (echo)

Who brings us together (echo)

And loves everyone! (echo)

Amen.

Workshop Focus: Jesus takes the hard road to the cross to save us.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksundayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday Storytelling

YouTube has a video of Palm Sunday celebrations in Jerusalem. Using Real Player, you can download a copy of this YouTube video straight to your laptop or class computer and play it, *without Internet access in your classroom!* Here's how:

1. Make sure your computer has RealPlayer installed. If not, you can do this for free at www.real.com. The program works on both the PC and Mac platforms and takes seconds to install.
2. Go to this YouTube link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj2idrehLWA>.
3. This video is 2 ½ minutes long, and takes up 5.9 MB on your hard drive. When you play the video, RealPlayer's downloader will offer you a chance to download it.
4. Click on your RealPlayer Downloader and hit the "DOWNLOAD" link for this video. It will automatically store to a folder called "REAL PLAYER DOWNLOADS" in your computer.
5. Test the video when disconnected from an Internet connection. You can do this two ways:

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

YouTube video "Palm Sunday Celebrations" downloaded from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj2idrehLWA>
Laptop or class computer
Speakers

- a) By opening RealPlayer and scrolling under “FILE” on the toolbar. There you will see “RECENT CLIPS” in the scroll, and under that the Palm Sunday celebrations in Jerusalem.flv file name. Click on this.
- b) By going into you computer’s “REAL PLAYED DOWNLOADER” folder and clicking on the Palm Sunday celebrations in Jerusalem.flv file

Once you click on “Palm Sunday celebrations in Jerusalem.flv,” the video should play automatically. Maximize screen size for better visibility.

6. Have the video ready to go before Open the Bible starts, paused at the beginning and at full screen size.

Important note: If your classroom has an Internet connection, simply go to the YouTube link in step 2. There is no need to install RealPlayer if you have in-class Internet, as you can stream the video.

Activity Instructions

Pass out Spark Bibles. Ask the kids if they know where the book of Luke is. Then invite them to turn to the Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday passages (Luke 19:28-40; 22:14—23:56; 24:1-12) on pages 1159-1160 and 1163-1168, which tell the story of Jesus’ journey to the cross and resurrection. Because of the large number of verses, abridge the reading to accommodate any time constraints, or skip the video portion. Invite kids to place an “I Read It” sticker in their Bible.

How did the people celebrate Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem? (waved palm branches, shouted “Hosanna to the King.”) **How did the people feel about Jesus being their king? How did the church leaders feel?** Accept kids’ answers. **Now let’s watch a video that shows what Easter celebrations are like in Jerusalem. What do you think it would’ve been like to see Jesus make his triumphant entry into Jerusalem?** Allow kids to share their responses.

Show the video utilizing the above instructions.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

The Cross at the Crossroads—Class Renderings

Set Up: Make sure computer(s) is/are set up with Kid Pix or a similar program that allows kids to make pictures with a computer. If only one computer is available, put kids into teams and have them share it, or have the class perform the activity as a collaborative project.

Activity Instructions

Now that we’ve heard the Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday story, we know more about the long road that Jesus took to the cross. Imagine . . . on Palm Sunday they hailed him as a king. And less than a week later, they nailed him to the cross as a criminal. But, of course, the story does not end there. Let’s see if we can

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Computer(s) with access to
Kid Pix or similar program
Printer and paper (optional)

make crosses that reflect the beauty, sadness, tragedy, and triumph of the Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday story. Decorate your crosses with words, symbols, colors, and designs that reflect the story as you've heard it today. Afterwards, you can tell us what you put on your cross and why.

Optional: If a printer is available, have kids print out and share their pictures. You may also have kids assemble these into a class book.

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Pages for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Isn't the Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday story incredible? In one week, we see it all: Christ adored, Christ arrested, Christ in pain, Christ on the cross, Christ in the tomb . . . and Christ resurrected. He took a long, painful road to the cross. Why? For us. Because he loves us and wanted to save us.

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Ask kids to gather in a circle. **Let's thank God for his most precious gift of all. Recite this prayer with me and imitate my motions:**

Dear God,
Jesus rode into Jerusalem,
The palms laid down before him. (wave palms)
But soon the celebration
Gave way to signs of warning.
One more final supper, (eating motions)
And Jesus was arrested. (hands out in cuffs)
They nailed him to a cross.
At death's door he was tested. (heads down)
But Jesus rose again, (heads up)
And walked out of the grave, (stride in place)
His love to share forever,
Our very souls to save.
Thank you, Jesus!
Amen.

Workshop Focus: In living and giving up his life, Jesus gives us life.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksundayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday Storytelling

Activity Instructions

Download the picture of three Roman crosses from the website listed in the supplies section. You may either print out copies in advance or save a picture to your desktop to show the class.

Pass out Spark Bibles and Spark Story Bibles. Invite older kids to turn to Luke 19:28-40; 22:14—23:56; 24:1-12 on pages 1159-1160 and 1163-1168 of their Spark Bibles, the story Jesus' journey to the cross and his ultimate resurrection. Younger kids can follow the action in their Spark Story Bibles, on pages 454-487. Because of the length of these passages, abridge readings as you see fit, in accordance with time constraints. Go around the group with each older kid reading one verse from the selected Spark Bible passages.

In these passages, Jesus undergoes a a lot of ups and downs. For most earthly kings, the story might end on a day like Palm Sunday—a great celebration, and you become the king, right? But for Jesus, it gets much more complicated. He chooses to give up his life, and in the end, the same crowds that cheered him as a leader now treat him as a common criminal. His final stop: the cross.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Picture of Roman crosses
used for crucifixion
downloaded from <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-abr/abr-a013.html>

In Roman times, crucifixion was a common method to execute criminals. Did you know that the Romans used at least three different kinds of crosses to punish people? Here are pictures of the crosses the Romans used. Show downloaded picture to group, allowing time for kids to discuss what they see in the picture.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

The Palm Sunday Brunch Menu

Set Up: Make sure computer(s) is/are set up with Microsoft Word and Kid Pix, or similar programs that allow kids to write and make pictures with a computer. If only one computer is available, put kids into teams and have them share it, or have the class perform the activity as a collaborative project.

Activity Instructions

In the Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday story, we hear a lot about the Last Supper. But what about Palm Sunday? That had to be a festive celebration! Let's imagine ourselves back in time to that first Palm Sunday, with Jesus riding triumphantly in Jerusalem. And, guess what? You're in charge of the banquet! What will we serve Jesus, the disciples, and the followers? What should the menu look like, from appetizers to dessert? Let's team up to create the Palm Sunday celebration meal for Jesus.

Have kids take turns working on whatever computer(s) you have available; consider utilizing waiting time by having kids sketch out their ideas with pencils and paper. Team older kids up with younger ones as a way to build leadership among the older kids, and confidence among the younger kids. If time allows, have each group share what they chose for their menu and why. If you like, assemble the menu items into a finished, fancy one where kids decorate the cover and pages.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Computer(s) with access to Microsoft Word, Kid Pix or similar programs
Printer and paper (optional)
Paper and pencils (optional)

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Pages for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Today's story is a big one! It starts with a parade fit for a king and ends with Jesus being our king!

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Palm leaves or a suitable substitute

Prayer Time

Ask kids to gather in a circle and pass out the palms. **As we pray today, take the palm and remember Jesus, both the way he began this story and the way he ended it: as a glorious king. Repeat each line after me.**

Good and gracious God,	(echo)
We thank you for the life of your Son	(echo)
Who taught us how to love	(echo)
Who taught us compassion	(echo)
Who lived with courage	(echo)
And treated others with care.	(echo)
To the very end of that life	(echo)
Jesus gave of himself	(echo)
And we salute him	(echo)
With shouts of Hosanna!	(echo)
Hosanna! Hosanna!	(echo)
Jesus lives! Jesus lives!	(echo)
And long live the one and only king of our hearts.	(echo)
Thanks be to God!	(echo)
Amen.	