

CROSS EXPLORATIONS®: JESUS DIES AND RISES TO SAVE US

LESSON	TITLE/SCRIPTURE	KEY POINT
1	Jesus and Zacchaeus Luke 19:1–10	Like Zacchaeus, we are among the lost whom the Son of Man came to seek and to save. Jesus asks us to forgive those who sin against us, as He forgives us, unconditionally.
2	The Triumphal Entry Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:28–40	The multitudes called out “Hosanna!”—Save us!—to their King. We, too, cry out “Hosanna!” to Jesus, our King, who entered Jerusalem to save us and all people by triumphing over sin.
3	The Widow’s Offering Mark 12:41–44	The widow gave all she had to God, trusting Him to provide and care for her. Her actions point us to Jesus, who gave His all for us, even though we fail to trust in God for all things.
4	The Lord’s Supper Luke 22:1–23	Jesus is our Passover Lamb, who with His very body and blood grants us forgiveness, life, and salvation.
5	Peter Denies Jesus Mark 14:26–72	Though we, like Peter, deny Jesus and His gifts, Jesus does not deny us because we belong to Him, baptized members of His Body, the Church. Instead, He forgives us and welcomes us back.
6	The Passion of Christ Matthew 27:11–66	The Father, the perfect, righteous Judge of the universe, gave His Son, Jesus, as the perfect, righteous sacrifice on the cross and punished Him for the sin of the whole world.
7	The Resurrection of Jesus Matthew 28:1–10	The resurrection reveals that the Father has accepted the Son’s sacrifice for our sins, and it fills us with confident hope that, as Christ has been raised from the dead, we, too, will rise to eternal life.
8	The Empty Tomb John 20:1–18	On the first Easter, Jesus revealed to Mary Magdalene and to His disciples that He was alive. Through the Word, the Spirit gives us faith to believe in Christ’s resurrection and comforts us when we mourn the death of loved ones.
9	Jesus Appears on the Emmaus Road Luke 24:13–35	The disciples recognized Jesus through the Scriptures and the breaking of the bread. Christ comes to us and abides with us through Word and Sacrament and continues to open our eyes and strengthen our faith.
10	Jesus Appears to Thomas John 20:19–31	We, like Thomas, doubt what we cannot see. Through His Spirit, God gives us eyes of faith that we might see Jesus in Word and Sacrament and believe in Him.
11	Jesus Appears in Galilee John 21:1–19	We are all like Peter in our words and actions, denying our Lord and weeping bitterly over what we have done. We need the same comfort Peter received—the comfort of sins forgiven and the assurance that even when we are faithless, Jesus remains faithful.
12	Jesus Ascends into Heaven Acts 1:1–11; Luke 24:44–53	Jesus, our risen Savior, ascended to heaven to prepare a place for us there with Him.
13	John’s Vision of Heaven Revelation 21–22	Those who believe that salvation has been accomplished by the all-availing sacrifice of Jesus on the cross will bear the sign of Christ, written on their forehead in Holy Baptism, and they will have access to the tree of life.



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Level
2

Jesus Dies and Rises
to Save Us

NEW TESTAMENT 4

EXPLORE



Teacher Leaflets
Grades 4–6

6

Great Sadness

After Jesus was placed in His borrowed tomb, the disciples mourned. It was a Sabbath Day of sadness. None of the things Jesus had done to prepare them for this day seemed to comfort them in their sorrow at His death.

7

Great Fear

When the women visited the tomb early on the third day, they were alarmed by the presence of “a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe” (*Mark 16:5*). The appearance of this angel and the fact of the open tomb initially caused great fear.

8

Great Joy

Fear and sadness turned to joy, however, when first the women and then the disciples themselves heard the angelic proclamation, “He is risen!” (*Luke 24:6*). We rejoice along with Jesus’ followers, for His crucifixion redeemed us from sin and His resurrection guarantees our own (*John 20:1–18*).

3

Great Wonder

At the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, Jesus’ disciples wondered at the institution of the Lord’s Supper and His new commandment to love (*Matthew 26:17–30; John 13:34*).

5

Great Suffering

Through the night and into the following day, Jesus was wrongly tried and falsely convicted of blasphemy, taken to Golgotha, and crucified—just as God had planned—for the sins of the whole world. As Jesus suffered on the cross, His followers suffered, as well, and His mother experienced the pain Simeon had predicted long ago (*Matthew 27:11–66*).

2

Great Anger

On Monday, Scripture records the display of Jesus’ anger at finding the temple’s Court of the Gentiles clogged with traders and money-changers profiting from those who came to make sacrifice and pray (*Matthew 21:12–17*).

1

Great Joy

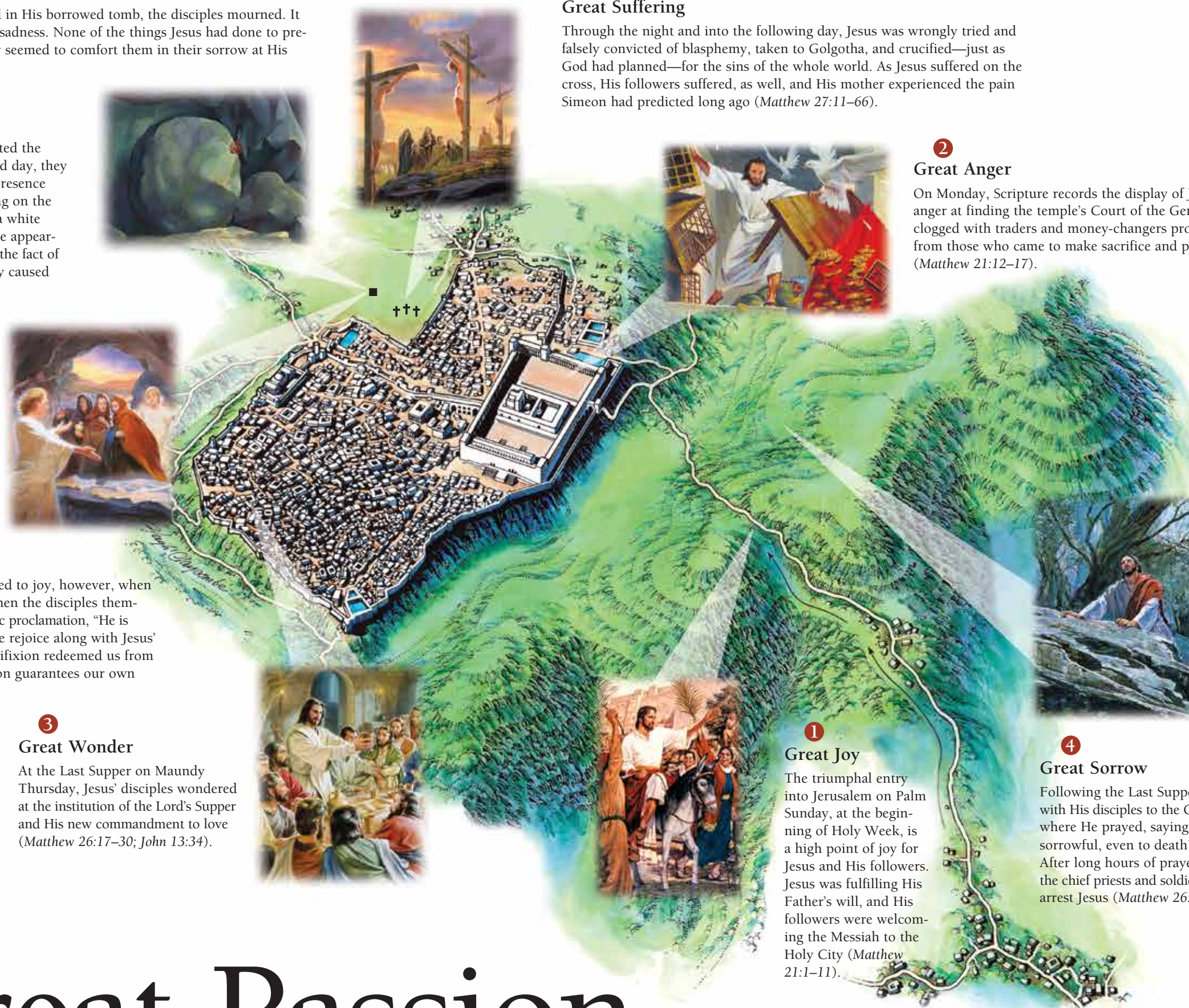
The triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, at the beginning of Holy Week, is a high point of joy for Jesus and His followers. Jesus was fulfilling His Father’s will, and His followers were welcoming the Messiah to the Holy City (*Matthew 21:1–11*).

4

Great Sorrow

Following the Last Supper, Jesus retreated with His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He prayed, saying, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death” (*Matthew 26:38*). After long hours of prayer, Judas came with the chief priests and soldiers to betray and arrest Jesus (*Matthew 26:47–56*).

Great Passion



His Searching Love

Draw a line to match the person with the place where Jesus found him or her.



- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Peter
(Matthew 4:18) | a. under a fig tree |
| Nathanael
(John 1:50) | b. in the temple |
| The Samaritan woman
(John 4:6–7, 9–10) | c. tending his fishing nets |
| Zacchaeus
(Luke 19:4–5) | d. by a well |
| The boy Samuel
(1 Samuel 3:10) | e. on the road to Damascus |
| Saul
(Acts 9:3–5) | f. perched in a sycamore tree |

Preparing the Lesson

Jesus and Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1–10

Date of Use



Key Point

Like Zacchaeus, we are among the lost whom the Son of Man came to seek and to save. Jesus asks us to forgive those who sin against us, as He forgives us, unconditionally.

Law/Gospel

I sin when I ignore my own sinfulness and focus on the sinfulness of others, rejecting them because of it. **Christ's blood covers not only my sins but also the sins of every sinner, no strings attached.**

Context

Jesus is on the last leg of His journey to Jerusalem as He passes through Jericho. It is a few days before Palm Sunday (Luke 19:28–40). Having already extended mercy to a blind beggar, a resident of Jericho (18:35–43), Jesus now runs into another resident of Jericho in need of mercy—Zacchaeus. Because tax collectors worked for the Roman government and overtaxed people to pad their own wallets, the Jews detested them as thieves and traitors. Since Zacchaeus was rich and a chief among the tax collectors (19:2), he was the object of particular spite, shunned as a “sinner” (v. 7).

Commentary

Thanks to the well-known ditty about this “wee little man,” Zacchaeus has often been portrayed as a sort of patron saint of the height challenged. But this is to miss the point. Short though he was, mammoth were his sins. If he is the patron saint of anyone, it is of those who become rich by sucking the lifeblood out of others. Zacchaeus was in the business that no respectable Jew would consider, indeed, that they would abhor as equal to prostituting one-self to the Romans. To make matters worse, such men often became wealthy, doubly damning them in the eyes of their countrymen.

So when Jesus invited Zacchaeus to come down from his sycamore perch and serve Him supper, “all grumbled,” saying, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner” (v. 7). This is as much, or more, an indictment of Jesus as of the tax collector. “How dare He even speak to

such filth, much less invite Himself over for a meal with that scoundrel!” the people scowled. For Zacchaeus had not only sinned in general, but he had also sinned against them. He had siphoned off their income. Jesus would be dining in a home built with money stolen from them, eating food purchased with cash that was rightfully theirs. If they wanted Jesus to do anything with Zacchaeus, it was to yank a switch from that sycamore tree and publicly whip him for his greed!

Perhaps because he overheard the grumbling and was moved by repentance and faith, this infamous sinner announced, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold” (v. 8). What a promise! What faith! As a clear fruit of his own repentance, Zacchaeus astounded everyone by such lavish generosity.

Salvation came to this man not because of his bigheartedness but because of his faith in Jesus, which was evidenced in this giving away of wealth. He is among the “lost” whom the Son of Man seeks, as are we, who are forgiven and called to forgive those who sin against us, no matter how Zacchaeus-like their sins may be.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit cph.org/ podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.



Start

Get Ready

Read Luke 19:1–10; review the Key Point and Law/Gospel Points.

Read Preparing the Lesson.

Review and adapt the activities suggested in this leaflet to suit your students and the time you have available.

Pray that God blesses the students through His Word.

Bible Memory Verse

[Jesus] came to seek and to save the lost.
Luke 19:10

Distribute Student Leaflet 1. Have students read Luke 19:1–10 and write the letter in each space to indicate about whom the verse is talking.

P = People; J = Jesus; Z = Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1 J was passing through Jericho.

Luke 19:2 Z was a rich chief tax collector.

Luke 19:3 Z sought to see who Jesus was.

Luke 19:4 Z climbed up into a sycamore tree.

Luke 19:5 J joined Zacchaeus for dinner.

Luke 19:7 P grumbled.

Luke 19:8 Z offered to give money to the poor.

Luke 19:9 J said, “Today salvation has come to this house.”

Say

Read Genesis 15:6. What was counted to Abram as righteousness? Abraham believed in the Lord and had faith in God’s promise.

Read Galatians 3:6–7. What did Jesus mean when He called Zacchaeus a “son of Abraham”? He meant that he had faith in God’s promise of a Messiah; and that God-given faith resulted in his salvation, not any good work he did.

Read

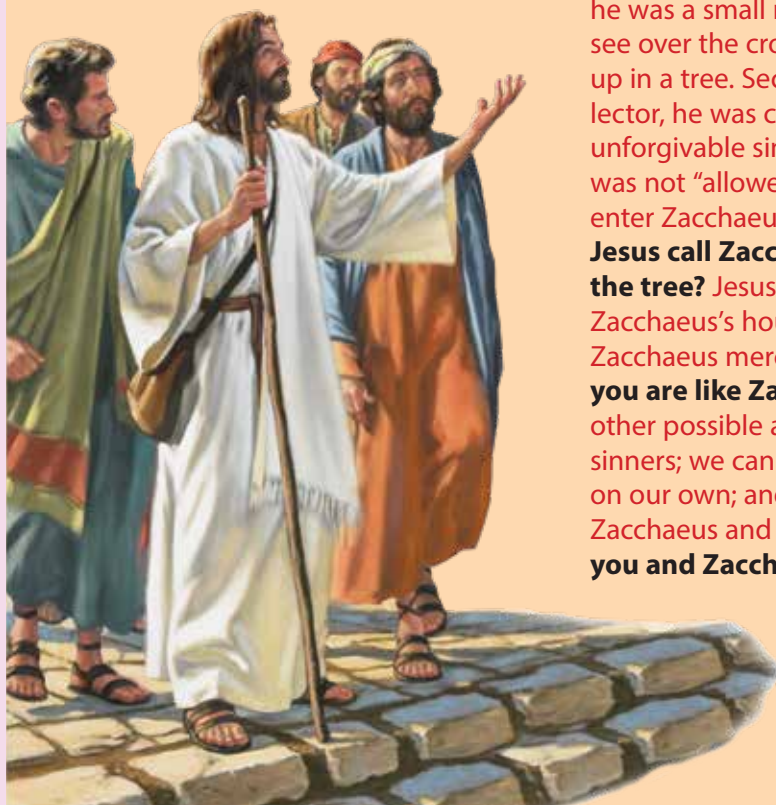
Ask

What was Zacchaeus’s job? He was a tax collector. Why didn’t the Jews like him? Tax collectors worked for the Romans and often

cheated people. They were considered unclean sinners, and Jews were not allowed to enter the house of a tax collector. Why couldn’t Zacchaeus come to Jesus? First, he was a small man and couldn’t see over the crowd, so he climbed up in a tree. Second, as a tax collector, he was considered to be an unforgivable sinner. Jesus, as a Jew, was not “allowed” by the Law to enter Zacchaeus’s home. Why did Jesus call Zacchaeus down from the tree? Jesus wanted to visit at Zacchaeus’s house and to show Zacchaeus mercy. Name three ways you are like Zacchaeus. Among other possible answers, we are sinners; we cannot come to Jesus on our own; and Jesus loves both Zacchaeus and us. Who loves both you and Zacchaeus? Jesus does.

Say

Zacchaeus was like us: poor in spirit. He was a sinner, and he knew it. When Jesus went to Zacchaeus’s house, He demonstrated that God blesses the poor in spirit and fills their hungry souls with His gifts. Zacchaeus was very thankful to have Jesus come to his house. He realized that even though he was a sinner, Jesus forgave him. He wanted to change how he lived so that others could know Jesus loved them too.



Look

Direct the students to the “Look” section. Have students review the various sections of information.

Ask

How do you think the Jews felt about paying taxes?

The Jews hated to pay taxes because they were so high and because the taxes reminded them that the Romans were in control. Most tax collectors collected taxes unfairly. They contracted with the Roman government for a certain amount of money. Any extra amount of money they collected was theirs to keep. They became very wealthy men, but they were not accepted by society. Some tax collectors, such as Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–10), were in charge of many tax collectors and became especially wealthy.

The tax potential here was great. Why might that be?

Besides the large population, many travelers passed through the area. A customs tax was levied on all goods transported through Jericho to and from Jerusalem. It was a good location for Zacchaeus to collect taxes and become rich.

Why were people like Zacchaeus disliked in Jesus’ day?

The people considered tax collectors and their families to be sinners and social outcasts. To eat with a Gentile or tax collector was especially wrong by Pharisees’ standards because eating with a person was a sign of friendship. Eating with sinners made a person contaminated and ceremonially unclean. This meant the person could not enter a synagogue or the temple.

In what other way was Zacchaeus “shorter” than other men? Zacchaeus was also “short” in status because of his profession. When Jesus called out to Zacchaeus and invited Himself to Zacchaeus’s house, He gave Zacchaeus a significant boost. Jesus’ actions demonstrated that God was truly in the forgiveness business and loved all people.

Say

Like Zacchaeus, we are sinners. We don’t deserve mercy. But Jesus makes us righteous by forgiving our sins. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us, making us acceptable to God. Our condition makes us lowly and despised, unable to come to God. Jesus sees our impoverished condition and comes to dwell with us in His grace.

At Home

Briefly point out the “At Home” section of the leaflet and encourage the students to share the leaflet and what they have learned in this lesson with their families, especially the questions printed there.

I Love a Parade!

Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday was not the only "parade" in the Bible. Match each of the Bible references below to the event.

f 1. Joshua 3:14–4:12

d 2. Joshua 6:1–21

b 3. 1 Samuel 18:5–9

a 4. 2 Samuel 6:12–19;
1 Chronicles 15:25–16:3

h 5. 2 Chronicles 20:27–28

e 6. Nehemiah 12:27–43

c 7. Luke 7:11–17

i 8. Luke 23:26–27

g 9. Acts 23:20–32

a. David danced and celebrated as the priests brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem.

b. The Israelite women danced and sang to welcome home the victorious Saul and David.

c. Jesus disrupted a funeral procession in the city of Nain.

d. The children of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls fell down.

e. Singers and musicians celebrated the rededication of the wall in Jerusalem.

f. The Israelites crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

g. Paul was safely taken to Caesarea while protected by 470 soldiers.

h. Jehoshaphat and the victorious army returned to Jerusalem.

i. Jesus was led to His crucifixion through the streets of Jerusalem.



Preparing the Lesson

The Triumphal Entry

Mark 11:1–10; Luke 19:28–40

Date of Use _____



Key Point

The multitudes called out "Hosanna!"—Save us!—to their King. We, too, cry out "Hosanna!" to Jesus, our King, who entered Jerusalem to save us and all people by triumphing over sin.

Law/Gospel

Sin brought death into the world for me and all people. **Jesus, the perfect Son of God, came to be my Savior and King, dying in my place and rising three days later to save me from sin and give me new life in His kingdom.**

Context

At Jesus' Baptism, God declared Him to be the bearer of the sins of the whole world. For three years, He preached, taught, and worked miracles to show the people that the Old Testament promise of the Messiah had come true. Now, in the last week of His earthly ministry, Jesus "set His face to go to Jerusalem" on His way to the cross (Luke 9:51).

Jesus entered Jerusalem from a small town near the Mount of Olives called Bethphage. It was a town near Bethany, where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived.

Commentary

Jesus chose to enter the city on a donkey, displaying the humble nature of His incarnation. He did not come into this world to sit on an earthly throne and rule over an earthly kingdom. He did not ride into King David's city to restore King David's earthly kingdom. If He wanted to do this, He would have ridden on a warhorse, leading an army of soldiers to fight the Romans, who occupied not only Jerusalem but all of the land of Israel. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world.

Instead, Jesus entered upon a donkey and was followed by a multitude that included the poor, the destitute, and even children. They were people who had been waiting to be rescued from their sins. Many in the crowd believed the Old Testament prophecies that the Messiah would be David's son and would come to them humble, riding on a donkey, as the prophet Zechariah had written, "Rejoice

greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (9:9). Animals that had not yet been used were especially appropriate for holy purposes. Jesus was not coming with the riches of an earthly king. No, He rode into Jerusalem with the accolades of a messianic, heavenly king, coming to give the people righteousness and salvation, forgiveness from their sins. This was the first time Jesus allowed people to treat Him as a king.

In a display of divine knowledge, Jesus described to His disciples where and how to find the donkey He would ride. After spreading their cloaks on the donkey, the disciples led the procession into Jerusalem, and the crowds followed. They shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:9). *Hosanna* means "save us now." The spreading of garments and palm branches is a ceremony of honor, respect, and reverence.

We know something about this crowd from the Gospels. Luke records that the people were rejoicing and praising God for all the great works that they had seen. John 12:17–18 expands on what these works were. These people, or at least a portion of them, had witnessed Jesus raising Lazarus from the tomb after he had been dead four days. The feeding of the five thousand happened just before Jesus "set His face to go to Jerusalem," so those people were also on their way up to Jerusalem at this time.

All of Jesus' ministry led up to this point. In fact, all of Holy Scripture anticipated this moment when God would save His people from their sins in Jesus.

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Get Ready

Read Mark 11:1–10 and Luke 19:28–40; review the Key Point and Law/Gospel Points.

Read Preparing the Lesson.

Review and adapt the activities suggested in this leaflet to suit your students and the time you have available.

Pray that God blesses the students through His Word.

Bible Memory Verse

He [Jesus] answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." Luke 19:40

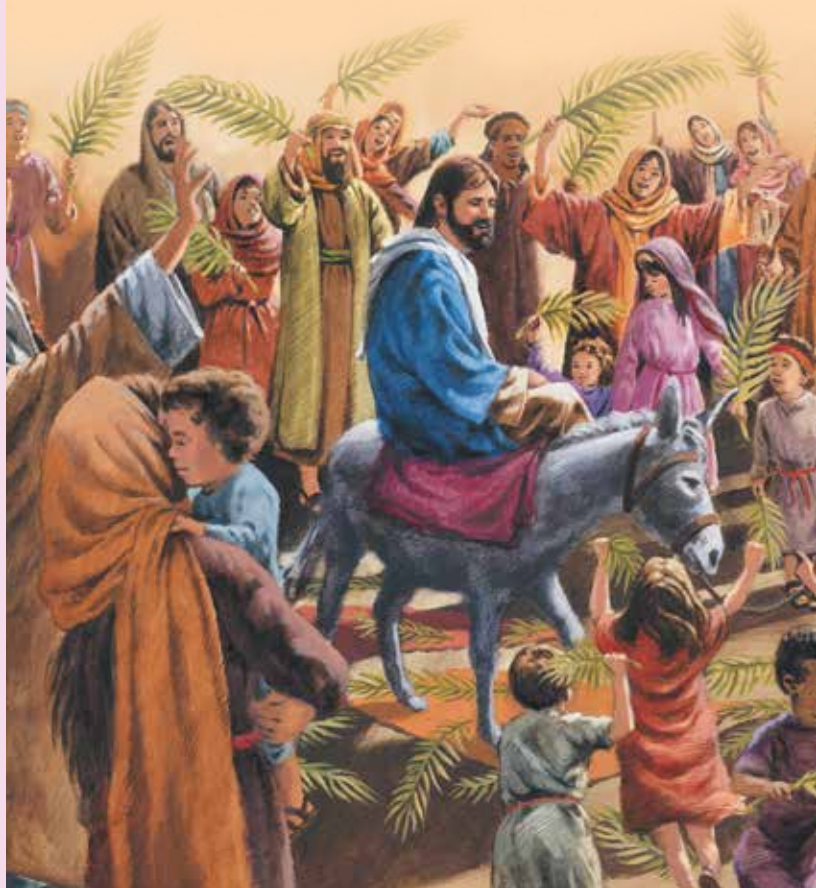
Have students open their Bibles to Luke 19:28–40 and find the mistakes in the summary of the Bible account. Direct students to change the words or phrases to set the record straight.

On the way to **Jerusalem**, Jesus sent **two** of His disciples to go to the village. He told them they would find a **colt or donkey** that no one had ever sat on before.

He said, "**Untie** it and bring it **here**. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you **untying** it?' you shall **say** this: 'The Lord has need of it.'"

On the way into Jerusalem, some people threw their **cloaks** on the road as Jesus passed. As Jesus got closer to the city, the crowd started to praise God loudly. "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace **in heaven** and glory in the highest!" they said.

Some of the other **Pharisees** in the crowd told Jesus to tell the disciples to stop. Jesus answered them, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very **stones** would cry out."



Have students review the information about Roman Triumph celebrations in this section. These victory parades celebrated and increased the popularity of generals in the Roman army.

Ask

Compare the Roman Triumph to Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. How were they similar? They were both celebrations; the people praised both. What was different? Jesus rode upon a simple donkey instead of a chariot. There was no procession of soldiers, prisoners, musicians, and so forth for Jesus. Jesus wore His ordinary clothing and no makeup. Jesus' victory was still to come.

Say

Jesus entered Jerusalem to the praises of His followers. Before the week ended, many of these same voices would be calling for His crucifixion. Through His sacrifice, the victory over sin, death, and the devil became ours.



Victorious Roman generals were celebrated with a Triumph procession through the streets of Rome, ending at the Roman Senate. The general rode in a chariot pulled by as many as four horses.

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Senators, trumpeters, enemy captives, treasures captured during the battle, white bulls for sacrifice, and the general's bodyguards led the procession. Following the general's chariot would be his family, officers, and his troops.



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The general's face would be painted red to imitate the red-painted face of the statue of Mars, the god of war.



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The general wore special clothing for the Triumph including a crimson embroidered tunic and toga, special shoes, and ornaments of ivory, silver, or gold. On his head, he wore a laurel wreath or crown.

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At Home

Briefly point out the "At Home" section and encourage students to complete these activities at home as a way for their family to review the Bible account.