



Sunday of the Entry into Jerusalem

Study Guide - Level 1 (Grades K-2 / Ages 5-7)

Today is Palm Sunday

Lesson Order

- Opening Prayer
- Intro / Recap last week's lesson
- Review the scripture readings
- Review the hymns of the day
- Read front page of handout together
- Use study guide lesson and Q&A
- Complete handout activities
- Preview next week's lesson
- Closing Prayer

Tips & Hints

- Use as much or as little of the content in this study guide helping the students discover how the Orthodox Faith can be a part of their daily life.
- Use open-ended questions, encouraging young people to share their experiences or ideas, drawing connections to the topics of the day, strengthening their relationship with Jesus Christ and His holy Orthodox Faith.
- Questions, ideas, feedback, and suggestions can be directed to the publisher at orthodoxjourneys@gmail.com

✓ Goal

After completing this week's lesson, students should be able to articulate the following:

- How today's scripture readings and liturgical hymns apply to their life
- Understanding what God is expecting us to live as His followers and members of the Orthodox Faith
- How being part of the Orthodox Church gives us the tools and skills to live godly lives regardless of our circumstances
- Why they believe and follow Jesus Christ as Orthodox Christians

✕ Overview

Last Week

Was the fifth and last Sunday of Great Lent honoring Saint Mary of Egypt for her repentance. Mary turned from being a sinful woman to one of the most holy examples of the Church.

Each of us can learn from St. Mary, facing God with humility, repenting of our sins and living as Christ commands us.

The Church encourages us to honor and be like Mary, fleeing from bad behavior, instead doing good things like prayer, fasting, and service to others - being examples of God's love and faithfulness.

This Week

is the Sunday of the Entry into Jerusalem by Our Lord Jesus Christ is a great feast of the Church. We remember that Lazarus was raised from the dead, so we glorify Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

We know and believe that Jesus is the Savior; He rose from the dead as God. So like the children who sing "Hosanna!," we carry palms and branches proclaiming the wonders of God, and our belief in Jesus Christ.

📖 Apostolos / Epistle and Gospel Readings

Have one student read today's Apostolos/Epistle and another read the Gospel lesson.

Epistle/Apostol:
Hebrews 9:11-14

Gospel:
Mark 10:32-45

1. What is the author of today's epistle/apostol talking about?
2. How does the message of this epistle apply to our lives?

Possible Answers

- As Orthodox Christians we rejoice in the glory and majesty of our God
- Jesus came as a humble king, being welcomed into Jerusalem for His miracles and saving acts
- By obeying the teachings of Christ, according to the Orthodox Faith, we can draw closer to God in this life and the next

1. What took place in today's lesson?
2. Why is this important for us living in the 21st century?

Possible Answers

- As our King, Jesus calls us to obedience and faithfulness
- We can do what He expects of us: repent, love others, live according to His teachings
- Jesus came in humility as an example for us to also live in humility with those around us
- We proclaim our belief in God by our actions (like the children carrying palms and branches)

🎵 Hymnography

Have a student read the hymn(s) on the front page of the handout.

1. What do the hymns teach us about today's commemoration?
2. How can the message of these hymns apply to our lives?

Possible Answers

- We glorify God for raising Lazarus from the dead
- Jesus has power over the living and the dead because He is God
- We celebrate this annual feast remembering a reminder that God cares for us every day

A Closer Look

Let's take a closer look at today's primary topic.

Summary of Gospel Reading

Today, we celebrate when Jesus Christ came to Jerusalem and people were excited to see Him, because he had raised Lazarus from the dead. This wonderful miracle, something only God can do, reminds us that Jesus is the Son of God, so we also celebrate and rejoice, knowing that Jesus is our Savior.

Jesus comes to Jerusalem in humility, without fanfare, yet the people still recognize that He is the Messiah because of His loving acts and wonderful deeds. Jesus is coming to Jerusalem, because He is going to be crucified and put to death. Yet His death is not the end of the story - for us, it is the beginning of our salvation.

What Does This Mean For Us?

We carry palms and branches - as signs of our victory through Jesus Christ. We sing the special hymns of Palm Sunday today, remembering and celebrating Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. As our King, Jesus loves us very much and wants the best for us. That's why He was willing to die for our sins, so we will have a path to eternal life in Heaven.

As Orthodox Christians we believe Jesus Christ has absolute authority, because He is God. And as a loving God, Jesus is caring, forgiving, and generous - He wants us to be the same way when we're at school, at home, at church, or anywhere. This way, other people will now that we are His followers.

Wrap Up

Jesus' message for us today is about humility. When He came to Jerusalem, Jesus didn't enter with a parade, but very simply, reminding us that we should be simple and humble in our life as well.

As we enter the days of Holy Week, listen carefully to the readings and hymns, remembering that God loves us and gave His Son for us to be saved. We come to church, so we can worship God as a family, grateful for the blessings we receive, and to prepare us to share those blessings with others when we leave church.

Make time to experience God's love through the services of Holy Week, transforming your faith and devotion to God.

Walk with Jesus this week to see Him raised in glory on the Cross. And be happy that as the Son of God, Jesus rose from the dead, because He has power over the living and the dead. This is wonderful news, and something just for you and me.

Discussion Questions

Choose from these possible questions to explore today's topic.

1. Why were the people of Jerusalem excited when Jesus arrived?
2. Why were the Chief Priests upset with Jesus?
3. How would you react if someone had been raised from the dead?
4. Why does Jesus want us to be with Him?

Possible answers

- He loves us
 - He wants us to be with God the Father in heaven
 - He doesn't want us to be held captive by sin and the devil
 - We are His children, and God wants the best for us
5. Why do we receive blessed palms and branches in church today?
 6. What should we do with the palms and branches?

On The Web

Learn more about this week's topics on the web:

Christ's Sovereignty (3:00 min)
<https://youtu.be/DboE1L-67rI>

Festal Hymns in various languages (14:18 min)
https://youtu.be/KLRy8CdiK_M

What the Saints Say

Hear what they say about today's topic.

"The sign of sincere love is to forgive wrongs done to us. It was with such love that the Lord loved the world."

- **St. Mark the Ascetic**

"God did not create us for wrath but for salvation (cf. I Thes. 5:9), so that we might enjoy His blessings; and we should therefore be thankful and grateful towards our Benefactor."

- **St. Peter of Damascus**

Saints of the Week

Learn about this week's feasts and saints.

May 1 - Saint Tamara, the King of Georgia was a great Christian ruler beginning in 1178, when she was 12 years old.

Her father appointed her to the throne, so they could rule together, but her died when she was only 17. St. Tamara was recognized as the King (not a Queen), because of her great leadership and compassion like our Lord, Jesus Christ, the divine King.

She encouraged people to be faithful Christians, building churches and monasteries to strengthen the faith across Georgia. When her husband acted inappropriately, she sent him away, refusing to accept un-Christian behavior.

When St. Tamara was 29, a massive invasion threatened to destroy the Georgia nation. After commanding the people to pray before battle, St. Tamara removed her royal robes and went humbly, barefoot, to pray kneeling before the icon of the Virgin Mary in the main cathedral in Tbilisi, the capital.

The Georgian people were victorious in withstanding the attack, as the Theotokos protected them through St. Tamara's prayers.

St. Tamara often gave of her possessions, caring for the poor, and lived humbly in private. Her countless hours in prayer led to physical exhaustion and pain, which ultimately led to her death.

Holy Saint Tamara, pray to God for us!

Preview

Next Week

Is the Feast of Feasts: Pascha, the Resurrection of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.

We celebrate and rejoice in the rising of Jesus from the dead on the third day after His crucifixion. By dying on the cross, Jesus takes all of our sins to Himself as the ultimate voluntary sacrifice. He does this, because He loves us SO much, and wants us to be with Him in heaven.

For the next 40 days, we will sing "Christ is risen..." and other festal hymns glorifying God for His great mercy towards us.

Terminology

Hosanna: A Hebrew word which means "Savior" which is found in the Book of Psalms and the gospel accounts of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-44, and John 12:12-19). When saying "Hosanna," we professing obedience and faithfulness before Jesus Christ, that He is our Savior.

Passover: A religious commemoration, remembering when God delivered His people (the nation of Israel) from slavery in Egypt, as recorded in the book of Exodus. The Jewish Passover was a freeing of God's people from slavery to Pharaoh, foreshadowing our Pascha (the Greek version of the word Passover) when Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead, leading us in a passover from death to life.

Prophecy(ies): The message(s) sent from God to select individuals in the Old Testament. Many prophecies spoke of future events for the people of Israel, in particular the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ Who would save the people of God.

Obedience: The act of following God. It is not demeaning to be obedient to God, instead it is freeing and a blessing, since God loves those who freely choose to follow Him.

Repentance: The act of admitting wrong doing, and making a conscious decision to change one's behavior, giving up bad choices and doing the things God wants from those who follow Him. True repentance leads to forgiveness.

