

ASSEMBLY OUTLINE

41. JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

Bible Base: Luke 19: 28 - 38

Key Christian Belief: Jesus is God's chosen King.

Aim: To help children understand that Jesus came to bring peace, not to make war.

You will need:

- the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.
- three small prizes - e.g. crème eggs.
- a crown, a royal robe and a 'throne' - e.g. a chair draped in velvet cloth.
- some palm leaves made of sugar paper.
- party poppers and streamers
- a copy of the words spoken by Jesus in Luke 19: 30-31

Introduction

Display a picture of the Queen's carriage and ask the children if they know who would normally ride in a carriage like this. Invite three (older) pupils to take part in a quiz about the royal family using the following questions:

Where does the Queen live?

Who is the Queen's husband?

Who is next in line to the throne?

Who did Prince William marry?

Who is Prince William's brother?

What is the name of William's son?

Where does the Queen stay when she visits Northern Ireland?

What kind of dogs does the Queen own?

Name the Queen's only daughter?

In the event of a tie ask:

For how long has Queen Elizabeth reigned? (Nearest answer wins.)

Award a small prize to each contestant but ask the winner to stay behind - to be crowned, dressed in a royal robe and invited to sit on a throne!

Story

When we think of a King or Queen this is what we usually think of - someone who wears a crown and a royal robe, sits on a throne, lives in a beautiful palace and rides in a golden carriage.

We read in the Bible that long ago the people of Israel had a king like this - his name was Herod. But he was not really the one in charge. That was Caesar - the Emperor of the mighty Roman Empire. He had chosen Herod as king of Israel - but Herod's job was to make sure the people obeyed Roman laws and paid their taxes to Rome. The people of Israel hated this. They were not free to make their own laws or spend their own money the way they wanted.

However, they believed that one day God would send them a new king - someone born into David's family, who would be able to set them free from their enemies, rule justly and wisely over them and enable them to live in peace and safety.

Many had started to believe that Jesus was this new king; he talked often about God's kingdom, and the amazing things He did seemed to show that He had come from God.

So when the rumours began to spread that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem a large crowd gathered to welcome Him. They sang and cheered and waved palm branches in the air - like flags. They threw their coats down in front of Jesus - like a red carpet.

Use the dramatized Bible reading attached to help children picture the scene.

Do you think His followers noticed anything strange about the way Jesus came riding into Jerusalem? It must have seemed very strange to them that He was riding on a donkey. They would have expected their king to come riding on a battle horse, not on a donkey. But Jesus wanted them to see that He wasn't the kind of king they were expecting. He had come to bring peace - not to make war.

Exploring Christian Belief

The Bible tells us that human beings, like us, have turned away from God. Christians believe that God is the One who made the world and has the right to rule over it - but we have ignored what God says and chosen our own way instead. We have acted as if we are the ones in charge and not God. We have not looked after our world or treated others the way God says we should. It is like we are at war with God.

But the Bible also says that God sent Jesus into the world to do something about this. It says that Jesus didn't come to remind us of all the rules we have broken, to tell us off, or to punish us as we deserve. Instead it says that He came to make peace - to put things right between us and God and to take the blame for the wrong things we have done so we that we who are God's enemies could become His friends instead.

Someone once said that the best way to destroy an enemy is to make Him your friend. And Christians believe that that is what God has done for us - He sent Jesus into the world to show His love for us, even while we were His enemies. Because of what Jesus has done for us, God says in the Bible that if we turn away from wrong things and put our trust in Him, He is ready to forgive us and we can change from being His enemies to being His friends. We don't need to be at war any more. Jesus came so we could have peace with God.

And Christians believe that peace with God is just the beginning. Once we have peace with God, with His help we should be able to start living in peace with others too. Jesus has promised us in the Bible that if we follow Him we will live with Him one day in His forever Kingdom and when that day comes there will be no more war. The whole world will be at peace. I don't know about you - but I'm looking forward to that!

Reflection

Ask the children to imagine a world in which everyone was at peace with God and with each other. What would that be like?

Finish with a prayer thanking God that Jesus came to bring us peace and asking Him to help the children live at peace with others.