

Session Five: Holy Week Part I

Main Ideas: The events of Christ's Passion are the fulfillment of the Old Testament Prophecy. When we say "Christ IS Risen!" we are recognizing that He is Christ, the Messiah, the One who was foretold.

Supplies needed: Chart paper, Participant Workbooks for each youth (This will be used during each session and should be kept with you after sessions are completed)

Holy Week - Some aspects of Holy Week can be gruesome. In most cases, the goriest details are not included. Keep an eye on children, especially younger ones. Even if they are used to watching or reading about violence, being in a different environment and away from home may affect a child's reaction. Remind children that the church teaches us that if you have done the best you can to follow God's will and have asked for forgiveness when you make mistakes, death on earth means returning to God. So while the violence may be unpleasant, the end of Christ's suffering means resurrection and salvation!

(15 minutes) Read through the sections about Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday.

After making our way through the 40 days of Great Lent, we begin one more week of fasting and preparation, Holy Week. During this week, the services of the church walk us through Christ's passion-the events that led to His death on the Cross. We hear the account of what happened from those who were there. We learn of the many ways in which Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy, signaling to the people and to us that Jesus was truly the Messiah coming to save all through His Resurrection. We incorporate actions and symbols to help us understand what happened that week in Jerusalem.

"Lazarus Come Forth"

Holy Week begins with Lazarus Saturday, the day we remember Jesus raising His friend Lazarus from the dead. This action would be the last straw for the Jewish leaders who were jealous of Jesus. After hearing Him teach and seeing the miracles that He performed, people followed Him, looking for the Messiah that had been promised to them. The Jewish leaders were losing their power over the people. [Ask Youth: "How do you think the leaders felt about that?"](#)

Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, were followers of Jesus. They had heard Him teach and He had even visited their house. When Lazarus became sick, his sisters sent a message to Jesus telling Him, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick (John 11: 3)." Jesus responded saying, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it (John 11:4)." Then He did something that might seem surprising. "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in



the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again (John 11:5-7)."

[Ask youth, "if you had a friend who was a doctor, wouldn't you want them to visit your family if someone was sick? What would you expect them to do?"](#)

Jesus's disciples remind Him that powerful people are getting angry with Him, but Jesus said that they must go. "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe (John 11: 14-15)." It is easy for us to think if Jesus really loved them why did He wait? Why was He glad that they hadn't gone to be with Lazarus? You wouldn't be the only one wondering...

Martha greeted Jesus saying, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give you." Jesus told Martha that her brother will rise again. Because they had been learning from Jesus, Martha said she knows that he will rise again at the time of the resurrection. She shows that although she knows that Jesus is holy, she doesn't fully understand that He is God...He doesn't have to wait for God's permission or power to raise Lazarus from the dead. Jesus used this moment to explain, "I am the resurrection and the life...Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord. I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world (John 11:25-27)." Martha called her sister and when Mary saw Jesus, she also said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died (John 11:32)." Jesus saw how upset His friends were, and He too was sad, but now we will see what He meant when He told Mary and Martha that Lazarus's sickness would not be for death but so that the Son of God would be glorified.

Jesus went to the place where Lazarus was buried four days earlier and asked someone to remove the stone covering the tomb. After thanking God loudly so that everyone heard Him, He commanded Lazarus to come out of the tomb. To everyone's surprise, Lazarus appeared, still wrapped in the cloths from his burial. [Ask youth, "What do you think people were thinking about what they just saw? What do you think their friends would say if they told them about seeing Lazarus come out from the tomb?"](#)

After seeing this miracle, many people believed that Jesus was God. Waiting until after Lazarus had been dead for several days meant that many more people became believers- the Son of God was glorified through it.

The end of this section of John's gospel lets us know what will happen next as Jesus returns to Jerusalem for the Passover. "Many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, 'What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place our nation...Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death (John 11: 45-48 & 53)."

(15 minutes) "Catch the King" activity- Set up a piece of chart paper with the question: 'What are some qualities of a good king?' Ask them to add anything that comes to mind. After they've added something to the list, have students move their chairs into a circle facing each other to play a game called, "Catch the King." Students may have played games with a similar premise before, but the goal is to figure out who is the "king" of the circle. Choose one student to be the person trying to catch the king and ask that student to leave the room. Everyone else remains seated while you quickly choose one other student to be the "king" of the circle. That person begins an action such as clapping their hands, tugging their ear, shuffling their feet, etc. Everyone else mimics the action the "king" chooses and the "king" attempts to change the action every so often without being caught. The rest of the circle tries to pay attention to the "king" without giving their identity away. The person who left the room returns to the center of the circle and tries to catch the "king." For example, if the "king" was shuffling

their feet on the floor, they may begin to tap their knees with their hands, without the person “catching” them. The “king” continues to change the action, while the “catcher” makes guesses about who they think the king might be. If the student can catch the “king,” the king becomes the next person to guess and the “catcher” gets to pick the next “king.” You will not have time for everyone to be catcher and/or king, so you may want to set some guidelines so that you get a few rounds in. Consider requiring the king to change the motion every 10 seconds and/or limiting the number of guesses or amount of time the person has to catch the “king.” If the catcher is unsuccessful, they should find a spot in the circle (don’t leave them in the middle for too long).

Play the game for about 10 minutes, then take a few minutes to go over what the students wrote on the chart paper. What themes do they see? Return to the workbook to finish the session.



The King they wanted

Take a look at the list you made about what makes a “good” king. Shortly after raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus and His disciples headed back to Jerusalem. News of what had happened in Bethany had already spread to the city and people were there to greet their “Messiah,” the king they had been waiting for. As we mentioned in the last Session, the Jews were given many clues in the Old Testament about who the Messiah would be. For centuries, the Jewish people had been ruled by other powers like the Babylonians and now the Romans. They believed that their Savior would be a warrior who would kick out the Romans and let the people live their own way. When they realized that Jesus was the Messiah, they greeted him with palm branches, ready for a victory parade.

The King we needed

However, they hadn’t paid close enough attention to the clues from the prophets and Jesus’s teachings. Jesus was not coming to destroy the Romans, He was coming to destroy the power of death. When Adam and Eve were sent out of the Garden of Eden for disobeying God’s rules, they separated both their soul and their body from Him. Before Jesus’s resurrection, when a person’s body died, their soul went to Hades. The gates to Heaven were still shut. The Messiah wasn’t coming to free the Jews from the Romans. He was coming to free the souls of all of the Righteous people who had lived a good life and were waiting for the chance to rejoin God in Heaven. [*Ask youth, “How does it feel when you think you are about to get something- maybe a present or something you’ve been asking for and it turns out you get something different?”*](#)

This is how the events of Holy Week begin. Throughout the week we remember Christ entering into Jerusalem on a young donkey, spending His last few days with His disciples, being betrayed by one of them who turned Jesus into the council of Jewish leaders. They, along with the Roman leaders, put Jesus to death. We mourn the

death of Jesus, but Just like Lazarus, the death of His body will be so that God will be glorified and we will all be given the chance to go to heaven.

The Old and the New

Throughout the services of Holy Week, we hear that the events that happened around Jesus and to Him were done in a specific way to fulfill the prophecy. When we say that 'Christ IS Risen!' is a statement about what we believe, then we have to know that this was actually Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, the one whom the prophets were talking about. Some people thought that Jesus was just a really holy man, maybe a prophet. By looking for the connections between the clues (prophecy) about the Messiah in the Old Testament with Jesus, the New Testament, we can see that truly He is the One the prophets were telling us to look for.



Draw a line from each piece of Old Testament prophecy to the part of the New Testament that shows Jesus fulfilling the prophecy.

(15 minutes). Have students read the information about Christ fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy, and then draw a line to match the Old Testament prophecy with the New Testament witness. Finish the Session with Christ IS Risen!

Prophecy of the Old Testament

New Testament Account

"O Lord, save us now; O Lord, prosper us now. Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord"

Psalm 118:25-26

"And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;"

Matthew 27: 50-52

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Proclaim it aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King comes to you; He is righteous and saving; He is gentle and mounted upon a donkey, even a young foal."

Zechariah 9:9

"And He said to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it... Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it."

Mark 11: 2 & 7

"Although He was ill-treated, He opened not His mouth. He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb is silent before his shearers, so He opens not His mouth."

Isaiah 53:7

Matthew 27:50-52 "When they heard Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: 'Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

John 12:12-13

"Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord; "Behold I will open your tombs, bring you up from your grave, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

Ezekiel 37:8

"And the high priest arose and said to Him, 'Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against you?' But Jesus kept silent."

Matthew 26: 62

