

Matthew 21:1-11

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- [0 : 0 0] So, this week is the last week before the holidays. So, just one more week of school. And I see a few smiles, even when I just mention that. So, after this week, you're on holiday. Yeah! Two weeks of holiday. Is anybody going to be going somewhere on holiday?
- Are you just going to have fun at home? Yeah. Where are you going, Rebecca? You're not sure. Somewhere nice. Somewhere...
- Edinburgh! Oh, right. Edinburgh is a lovely city, isn't it? Yeah, it's nearly as nice as Aberdeen. Some people think it's nicer, but no. Nearly as nice as Aberdeen.
- Anybody going very far away? Yes. Where are you going? Aviemore. Lots of fun things to do in Aviemore. And in Aviemore, if it's cold, it doesn't matter because lots of the things in Aviemore...
- [0 : 5 5] It needs to be cold. Yes. Where are you going? Stornoway. Stornoway. Oh, you're going across the Minch. Yes. And where are you going? Stornoway as well. Oh, Stornoway is the most popular destination so far.
- Anybody going anywhere else on holiday? Yes. Where are you going, Ryan? Allness. Allness. Wow. Allness. Right. Okay. All lots of fun places. Good. Well, that's in a week.
- You've got another week of school yet, okay? So you've got to work hard in school this week. I don't know if it's all week. I discovered today that Joseph hasn't got school on Friday. I think they should be in school right till Friday, but apparently not. So I don't know about the rest of you. Maybe it's just four days of school. Now, why have you got holidays? What are these holidays called? Not the summer holidays. Not the Christmas holidays. What holidays are these? Yeah. What holidays? Easter. That's right. They're the Easter holidays. So I want to talk a little bit about Easter, the reason why you're getting holidays. Now, Easter weekend, what we call Easter weekend, is next weekend. And there are two very special days that happen at Easter weekend. We have one day that we call Good Friday. That's this Friday coming. And that's when we especially remember how Jesus died on the cross for our sins. And we call that day Good Friday, or that's what we sometimes call it.
- And then Sunday, next Sunday, not today, next Sunday, is Easter Sunday or Resurrection Sunday. And obviously, by calling it Resurrection Sunday, it's pretty easy for us to work out what it is we especially celebrate then. That's that Jesus rose again. He died, but He rose again from the dead.
- Now, we celebrate that every Sunday, but especially on Easter Sunday or Resurrection Sunday. But there's another special day to do with Easter, which is today. Do you know what today is called? I've already actually said yes. Palm Sunday. That's right. So, I want us to think a little bit about that. Now, we've read in the Bible about that. We've read about how Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey.

[3 : 15] Now, that may seem strange to you, that He would come in riding on a donkey. Has anybody here ever ridden a donkey? Maybe when you've been on holiday. Or how about a horse? Has anybody ridden a horse? Oh, yes, we've got one or two folk. Oh, quite a few folk have ridden a horse. Do you know, oh, over here as well. You know something I did last year in my Easter holidays? I had a wee shot of riding not a horse, not a donkey, but something with a hump. A camel. Well, I think he had two humps, or else it would have been very painful. It was in the middle between the two humps.

I honestly can't remember, but it was a camel. So, but it's not something we do normally, and we certainly don't come into Aberdeen riding on a donkey or a horse or a camel. But for the people who saw Jesus coming into Jerusalem, it wouldn't have seemed quite so strange, because that was not that unusual that people would get from one place to another riding on something like a donkey or a horse. Well, Jesus came into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday riding on a donkey. And the reason we call it Palm Sunday is that the people were so excited about Jesus coming, they were excited, maybe because they knew that He had done so many good things and so many miracles and people who had been healed, and they were very excited about Him coming. And some of them laid out their cloaks, their big coats on the ground so that Jesus and the donkey could ride over them. And also, they cut down some branches or some palms from the trees, and they laid that out. That's what we've read in the Bible as a way of welcoming Jesus, as a way of showing how pleased they were and how excited they were that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. But I want to tell you a part of the story that we don't usually think about quite so much, but happened on that same day on Palm Sunday. We've read that when

Jesus came to Jerusalem, He then went to the temple. And when He came into the temple, He healed those who were sick. We'll just read the verses so that we can remind ourselves the part that we want to especially think about today. We say, we read there that the blind and the lame came to Him at the temple, and Jesus healed them. Then we read, but when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things He did, how He healed the people who were sick, and the children shouting in the temple area, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were indignant, or they were very cross, or they were very angry. So, there there's something that is especially interesting for you, because it tells us about some children who were in the temple, and these children were shouting. And some of the people weren't very happy about that, but then we find out what Jesus thought. So, this morning, we want to learn from these boys and girls that we read about in the Bible. So, our teachers today are going to be those boys and girls, okay? So, they're going to teach us some very important things. So, the boys and girls we've read about in the Bible, they're going to teach us. They're going to teach the boys and girls here this morning, and they're going to teach all of us, okay? So, this morning, our special teachers are boys and girls. Now, that's a bit strange, isn't it? Maybe you think, oh, the teachers are always the grown-ups, and the boys and girls are the pupils. But today, our teachers are the boys and girls we read about here in the Bible, where we're told that they were shouting in the temple, shouting out, Hosanna to the Son of David. Now, there's four things that we're going to learn about what they were doing, four things they were doing that teach us some lessons. So, do you think you can remember four words? Put your hand up if you think you can remember four words, just four words. Some of you are quite confident. Some of you think, oh, four words is quite a lot, maybe three, but I don't know about four. Well, we'll see how we get on, okay? But there are four words that we're going to notice about what the children were doing that we've read about there in the Bible, and think about them a little, and learn some important things. The first thing that I think they were doing, and we don't find that word in the Bible, and I'll explain why I think it's a word that tells us something they were doing. And I've got these sheets just really to help me, because I'm not very good at remembering four words. So, at least with this, I won't forget them. Now, some of you are very good at reading.

Can you read what I put there? Somebody just shout it out if you can make it out. Copying. Copying. That's a funny thing to say, that these boys and girls were copying. Now, why do I say that? Well, we read in the Bible that when Jesus came into the temple, there were children shouting, Hosanna to the Son of David. Now, I was reading that, and I was thinking, now, why did they say that? Why did these children, why did these boys and girls say, Hosanna to the Son of David? And I thought, well, hang on a minute. Earlier on in the passage, we read that the grown-ups were shouting that. When Jesus was coming into Jerusalem, that's what they were saying.

So, I thought, I think what's happening here is that the children have heard what the grown-ups were shouting, and so they're saying the same thing. That's what we do, isn't it? We hear other people say things, and then we say, well, I'll say that as well. So, the children were copying the grown-ups. That's not all they were doing, but it's one of the things they were doing.

[8 : 48] Now, that made me think, is it always good to copy what grown-ups say? Not always. For example, sometimes I go to a place called Petaudry, which is a stadium in Aberdeen where Aberdeen play football, and there's lots of grown-ups go, and there's some things that some of the grown-ups say that I wouldn't be very happy if my children copied what they say, because sometimes they say things that aren't very nice. They maybe insult the other players, or they use bad words. Not everybody, but some people do. So, it's not always a good idea to copy what grown-ups say. But these children, they did well to copy the grown-ups, because the grown-ups were welcoming Jesus, and they were praising Jesus. And so, the children copied them, and they did the same. They maybe didn't understand everything they were saying. In fact, I don't think even the grown-ups understood everything they were saying, but they copied a good thing that the grown-ups were doing. And that's what I would say to you. Some of you, and many of you, have moms and dads who love Jesus and follow Jesus, and they praise

God, and they pray, and you do well to copy them. And as they praise God, so you too can do so. Now, there's a wee lesson here for the grown-ups as well, because if we think that our children are going to copy what we say, we should be very careful that what we say is a good thing to copy. But that's what the children were doing. That's the first thing I think I find. On Palm Sunday, the children in the temple, they were copying the grown-ups. Well, that's the first word. Now, let's see. I think I've got another word here that we can say the children were doing. We find this word in the Bible. It's not just me working it out. What word is that? You can shout out this word. Now, that's a clue. Shouting. You want to say it really loudly? Shouting. You're so well brought up and so well behaved. You think, no, I can't shout. But this is the interesting thing. The interesting thing is that the Bible tells us that the children were shouting in the temple. That sounds a bit...what do we make of that? Yes, shouting in the temple. Shouting in church. Do we approve of that? Shouting in church. That sounds a bit...not so sure about that, but that's what it says. Let me just make sure.

Let's see. What is this? Does it really say that? Hang on. I'm reading the Bible here. It's not just me. The children shouting in the temple. That's what it says. Hosanna to the Son of David. So, they were shouting. Now, they weren't shouting at each other. They weren't playing a game and shouting at each other. They weren't shouting at their mom and dad and being rude. They weren't doing that, but they were shouting. They were praising God. They were singing, I suppose, very loudly because what they wanted to say was important, and they were very keen on everybody hearing. So, they shouted the words that they cried out, Hosanna to the Son of David. They were very happy, and so their shouting was very, very loud. Now, that's something we should do. We should shout to God. We've sung today the first psalm that we sung. The first word is shout. Shout to the Lord with joy. And it's good when we sing loudly. When you come up and you sing with all your heart and with all your strength and with all your energy, and that is good. It's a good thing to do. These children in the temple on Palm Sunday were shouting with joy to God. Well, today is Palm Sunday, and the boys and girls here and all of us can do that as well. We can learn from these children about how good it is to shout for God, to God, with joy. So, that's my second word. First of all, they were copying. We have to be very careful that we copy good things and not bad things, but also they were shouting. But there's another one, and this one we'll spend a wee bit more time on. Can you read this one? Praising. These boys and girls were praising. Now, how do we know that? How can we be sure that the children were praising God?

Yes, we know the words that they said, but we said, well, maybe they were just copying the words, and they were copying the words. So, were they really praising God? Some of the grown-ups there didn't like it at all. They didn't think they were praising. They thought they were just making a big noise and behaving badly. They didn't like it. But so, how do we know that they were praising? Well, we know because that's what Jesus says. Notice what the Bible says. Some of the grown-ups who didn't like the boys and girls being there, didn't like the boys and girls making a big noise. They didn't like that the boys and girls were shouting out loud. They came to Jesus, and they said, do you hear what these children are saying? Do you hear the big noise they're making, how they're shouting? What do you make of that? And what did Jesus say? Yes, replied Jesus, have you never read from the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise? Praise. What Jesus is saying is that these children were praising God. He was sure that they weren't just copying what others were saying, but they were actually praising God. They were doing so very loudly. They were shouting their praise, but they were praising God.

And so, Jesus was pleased with that, and we're going to come on to that in a wee moment. But they were praising God. That's what they were doing. Now, why were they praising? Why were these children praising God?

[14 : 45] Why were they praising Jesus, even if they didn't understand exactly who He was or all that He was doing? Well, we've already said one of the reasons is that they were copying the grown-ups. And because the grown-ups were doing something good, that was good as well. But that's not the only reason. You see, we've also read that there in front of the boys and girls in the temple, Jesus was healing the blind and the lame. We've read that in that part of the Bible. So, they saw this. The boys and girls saw Jesus, and they saw somebody who was blind, and suddenly the blind person could see. And they saw somebody who couldn't walk well, and suddenly they could. And they saw all of this, and they were amazed. They thought, Jesus is wonderful. Jesus can do such wonderful things. And so, they praised Jesus because of what they saw, not just repeating the words that they heard others saying. They were doing that.

Those words helped them to praise Jesus, but also because they could see the wonderful things that Jesus had done. And that's exactly what it says in the Bible, that the grown-ups saw. They saw the wonderful things He did. And the boys and girls saw that as well. And that's why we praise God.

That's why you can praise God. Yes, it's good when you see mom and dad, or mom or dad, when you see grown-ups praising God, it's good that you should say, I want to do that as well. And when they're singing, you could say, I want to sing what they're singing. That's good. But it's especially good when you can say, and the reason I really want to praise God is because of all the wonderful things that He does, all the wonderful things He's done for me, that He's forgiven my sins, that He listens to me and hears me when I pray. He looks after me when I'm worried or frightened, all the wonderful things that God has done for me. I want to praise Him. Like these boys and girls, they saw Jesus, the wonderful things that He did, and they thought to themselves, well, we want to praise the One who is doing such wonderful things. So that's why they were praising. What were they saying? Well, we've read, haven't we?

Hosanna to the Son of David. And I imagine they also said what follows, or what the grown-ups were also saying just a little bit more, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

These were the words that they were using to praise God. And these words come from the Bible. We're going to sing them at the end of our service. We find them in Psalm 118. And that's interesting, isn't it? How good is God that He gives us words that we can use to praise Him? And it's good to sing the words of the Bible, because then we can use words that we know will be pleasing to God.

[17 : 38] They're God's own words that He gives us so that we can praise Him. Sometimes we don't understand them. But even when we don't understand them, or there are parts that we don't understand, we can be sure that what we sing will be pleasing to God, because it's His very own Word. So they praise Jesus for the wonderful things He had done. They praise Him using these words that we find in the Bible. But there's one other thing I want you to think about to do with their praising, and that is, what were they actually saying? We know where the words came from. Where they come from, they come from the Bible. But what do they mean? Hosanna to the Son of David. We don't use that word, Hosanna, do we? What does Hosanna mean? Well, really, it's a word that you would use to praise somebody, to honor somebody, to tell somebody how wonderful they are. And that's the word they use to praise Jesus and to praise God. And then they say who He is, the Son of David. Now, that's important because in the Bible, in the Old Testament, God had promised that He would send a Savior, and that this Savior, this King, this Messiah would be a descendant of David, a son, or a grandson, or a great, great, great grandson of David. So when the children, the boys and girls in the temple were saying,

Hosanna to the Son of David, even if they didn't understand it all, what they were saying was that this Jesus was the promised Messiah. He was God's promised Savior who would save His people from their sins. So they were saying wonderful and very important things as they praised Jesus. Hosanna to the Son of David who comes in the name of the Lord, who's sent by God to save His people. So it was wonderful things that they were saying as they praised God. And that's good that we can do that as well.

When we sing the songs that we sing, maybe from the psalm book as we're in church or at Sunday school, maybe there's sometimes things you're reading, you're thinking, well, I don't really understand exactly what that means. And though it's good to try and understand and learn more and more, but even when we don't understand everything we're saying, it's still good to praise God with the songs and the words that He gives us to use. So they were praising, but there's a final thing. Now, let's make sure you're remembering the words so far. What was the first word we said the boys and girls were doing?

They were copying, weren't they? They were copying the grown-ups and saying the same things that the grown-ups were doing and praising Jesus. So they were copying. What was the next thing they were doing?

Shouting. Now, you've got to say shouting, shouting, or else it's not proper. So what else were they doing? Shouting. Okay, that's more or less. I think you need more porridge. So they were copying, they were shouting, and what was the other thing? Praising. Right, and there's a final one.

[20 : 41] Praising. Yes, you can shout praising as well. That's okay. So what was the final thing they were doing? Pleasing. Now, what's that about? Well, what that's about is this. We've already sort of mentioned it, but I want to especially mention it. When these boys and girls were shouting in the temple, that's what the Bible says. They were shouting in the temple, Hosanna to the Son of David. Some people were very upset. Some of the grown-ups thought this was just a piece of nonsense. It wasn't good that these children, these pesky children, were making a lot of noise. Not just that they were making noise. That's not the only thing they were upset about. They were also upset about what they were saying about Jesus. But I think they were also upset just by the big noise that was going on.

And so they complained to Jesus. And they said, do you see what's happening? These boys and girls, they're shouting, how are you happy with this? And of course, Jesus answered that He was.

That He was pleased with the boys and girls, shouting, Hosanna to the Son of David. And the reason He was pleased is that these boys and girls were doing exactly what God had created them to do.

They were doing exactly what God wanted them to do and why God had brought them to the temple that very day to see Jesus and the wonderful things that He did and to shout out Hosanna to the Son of David.

So Jesus was very pleased with the boys and girls. He wasn't upset at all. He was delighted because they were doing what God wanted them to do. And you know, one of the most important things that you need to work out in your life, even though you're just still quite small. Some of you are quite big and some of you are quite small. But one of the most important things is to know who you should please. Because boys and girls and grown-ups as well, we live our lives trying to please people. And we have to know who we should please. And this lesson that the boys and girls in the temple teach us is that the most important thing we can do in our lives is please God. If we live our lives trying to please other people, then things aren't going to go well. But if we live our lives wanting to please God, and with God's help pleasing God, then God will be pleased with us, and life will be good for us.

[23 : 15] It's the most important thing we can do. These boys and girls shouting in the temple, Hosanna to the Son of David, they pleased Jesus. He was pleased. And He says so. When others weren't, others were upset, others were cross, He said, I'm not. I'm pleased when boys and girls, when children are doing maybe what some of the grown-ups aren't doing. And I'm very happy with them. And that's what I want you to do, to please God in your lives. To please God as you praise Him. To please God as you obey Him. To please God as you follow Jesus and live for Jesus. So, these are the four things that these children teach us. It's good to copy good things. Good to copy good things. It's good to shout loudly and with lots of excitement because of all that God is and all that He's done. It's good to praise Him and to use the Bible and the words we find in the Bible to praise God and with our lives to praise Him. And especially it's good in all of these things that we would want to please God. And if we live a life that's pleasing to God, then that will be a life that is blessed and happy and that we will enjoy. So, these are the things I wanted you to remember from Palm Sunday, something that happened on that first Palm Sunday so long ago. So, let's just bow our heads and let's pray again as we finish. Our God, we do thank You that You are a God who loves us, who loves all of us. You are a God who receives our praise. You are a God who is pleased.

When we recognize You for who You are, when we shout loud with joy to our God. Forgive us for the times when we fail to do so. We pray that You would help us, all of us, the boys and girls and all of us here, to know what it is to copy good things, to learn from those who have taught us, those who have the privilege of parents or grandparents or Sunday school teachers who know and who love Jesus and who help us to learn, to follow Him, that we would copy them, that we would copy their example, that we would know what things we shouldn't copy, things that aren't good, that aren't pleasing to You.

Help us to shout to You with joy. Help us to praise You, that we would have good reason to praise You, not just because others are doing it, but because of the wonderful things that You have done in our lives. Help us to praise You and to recognize who You are and all that You have done. And help us especially in all of our lives and in all that we do to be those who live lives that are pleasing to You. And all of this we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Okay, well done. You did very well to listen to all that and to remember those words and some of the lessons that we can pick up from these children. So, these boys and girls on Palm Sunday long ago, they've taught us, I think, some very important things for us to take away with us today. And what we're going to do now is we're going to sing. We're going to sing from Psalm 118 where we actually find some of the words that the grown-ups and the children were using to praise God on Palm Sunday. And that's in Psalm 118. It's on page 156. So, if you look in your Psalm book, and if you get to Psalm 156, we'll sing from verse 23 through to the end of the Psalm.

And especially verse 25, we'll notice words that remind us of what we've read in Matthew's gospel. Save us, O Lord, we humbly pray. O Lord, we pray, grant us success. He's blessed who comes in God's great name, Jesus, who came in the name of the Lord. You, from the Lord's house, we will bless. So, let's stand to sing Psalm 118. We'll sing the psalm from the tune, Walton.

We will always sahe with us, whether we'veestänibot breezy, or maybe we'll sing recipe of this prayer. And He luth met us today. We'll sing■■■■us with your Sabbath hour at another from therics and sarees appropriation of battles Fifth Fortune. Not only know we, we'll learn how the one would be bested, but we can hurry and please pray. So, let's stand here. And we'll sing our great delight.

[28 : 01] In us, O Lord, we hope we pray. O Lord, we pray grant us success.

His blessed love in God's great day. Here from the Lord's house we will bless.

The Lord is come, and He has made. His glorious light upon us all.

Let us approach the altar's heart and celebrate the festival.

You are my God, I'll give you thanks.

[29 : 26] You are my God, I'll give you praise. O thank the Lord for He is good, His strength as well, and yours always.

Amen. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all now and always.

Amen.