



## WEEK FOUR – MARCH 2024 – PRETEEN

**Bible Story:** *Palm Sunday | Matthew 21:1-11*

**Key Question:** *Why are promises important?*

**Memory Verse:** *“God so loved the world that He gave his one + only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but have eternal life.” – John 3:16 NIrV*

**Virtue:** *Easter – Celebrating that Jesus is alive*

**Basic Truth:** *I can trust God no matter what*

**Series Overview:** Throughout Scripture, we can see how peace is something near to God’s heart. Even though people chose to break their relationship with God, God made a way to fix that relationship through Jesus. And because we reflect God’s image, making peace with others should be a priority for us as well. That’s why we’re taking the first three weeks of March to highlight some passages and stories about peace to help kids understand more about how they can be peacemakers in their world.

**Key Question: Why are promises important?** We start with a high-level question about promises to get kids thinking about the ways that making and keeping promises can build trust with people. Promises can allow us remain at peace with each other. They can also show how much we’re willing to go the extra mile to show others how much they mean to us. Most of all, we pray that kids start to understand some of God’s huge promises that came true through Jesus.

---

## 9:00 - 9:15 | 11:00 – 11:15 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

---

### Opening Small Group Activity

*Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** basket; two dozen Easter eggs; stopwatch (phone)

### What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive + make sure to introduce yourself to any guests who may be visiting for the first time
- Instruct kids to sit on the floor
- Ask for a volunteer
- Instruct the volunteer to sit facing the rest of the group
- Hand the volunteer that basket filled with mismatched eggs
- Recruit another kid in the group to use the stopwatch to time the kid who is matching the eggs
- When you say, “Go!” direct the kid to match all of the eggs and snap them together as fast as they can
- After the first kid has matched the eggs, invite the other kids in the group to help you take them apart, place them back in the basket, and mix them up
- Ask for another volunteer who would like to take a turn
- Continue playing until everyone who wants to try has taken a turn
- Keep track of each kid’s time
- Whoever matches the eggs in the least amount of time is the winner + receives a prize!

---

**9:15 - 9:45 | 11:15 – 11:45 | LARGE GROUP**

---

**Large Group Overview:** We kick off Easter week with the story of Palm Sunday as described in **Matthew 21:1-11**. By this time, God’s people had been waiting hundreds of years for God’s promised Savior. As Jesus’ ministry grew, the people were starting to believe that Jesus WAS that Savior. They were sure that God’s promises were finally coming true! So when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, just like a prophecy foretold, the people celebrated and worshipped Him. And while they might not have fully understood how Jesus was about to make peace, they could celebrate because God was faithful to send a Savior.

---

**9:45 – 10:05 | 11:45 – 12:05 | SMALL GROUP**

---

**Verses to Take With You**

**[Hear From God | Memory Verse Activity]**

*Reflect: an activity creates space for personal understanding + application*

**What You Need:** Bibles; writing utensils; “Power Prophets” Activity Page

**What You Do:**

- Instruct the kids to get into pairs and sit together
- Hand each pair of kids a Bible, a writing utensil and copy of the “Power Prophets” Activity Page
- Instruct the pairs to work together to look up the verses on the activity page and answer the corresponding questions
- Once every pair of kids has finished, call on different pairs to read the verses out loud and answer the questions
- After reviewing the verses and questions, ask:
  - Who were the prophets we learned about in these verses? (*Micah, Zechariah, Isaiah, Nathan*)

- Why is it important to consider what prophets said about Jesus?
- How does it make you feel when you think about God kept the promises to send a Savior?
- Use a Bible to look up John 3:16 and read it to the group
- Invite the group to come up with a creative way to remember this verse
- Answer Key:
  - *Micah 5:2 – Israel; Bethlehem*
  - *Isaiah 9:6-7 – Wonderful Adviser, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace)*
  - *Zechariah 9:9-10 – Donkey (donkey’s colt); peace*
  - *2 Samuel 7:4-5, 12-13 – Nathan; forever*
  - *John 3:16 – Jesus; eternal*

## **Discussion Questions**

### **[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]**

*Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding*

**What You Need:** N/A

### **What You Do:**

- Instruct the kids to get into pairs and sit together
- Hand each pair of kids a Bible, a writing utensil and copy of the “Power Prophets” Activity Page
- Instruct the pairs to work together to look up the verses on the activity page and answer the corresponding questions
- Once every pair of kids has finished, call on different pairs to read the verses out loud and answer the questions
- After reviewing the verses and questions, ask:
  - Who were the prophets we learned about in these verses? (*Micah, Zechariah, Isaiah, Nathan*)
  - Why is it important to consider what prophets said about Jesus?
  - How does it make you feel when you think about God kept the promises to send a Savior?

- Use a Bible to look up John 3:16 and read it to the group
- Invite the group to come up with a creative way to remember this verse
- Answer Key:
  - *Micah 5:2 – Israel; Bethlehem*
  - *Isaiah 9:6-7 – Wonderful Adviser, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace)*
  - *Zechariah 9:9-10 – Donkey (donkey’s colt); peace*
  - *2 Samuel 7:4-5, 12-13 – Nathan; forever*
  - *John 3:16 – Jesus; eternal*

### **Pray + Dismiss**

#### **[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]**

*Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding + application*

**What You Need:** “Prayer Palms” Activity Page; scissors; markers

#### **What You Do:**

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle
- Ask these questions and let kids take turns sharing their answers:
  - When and where do you like to pray?
  - Is it challenging to make time for prayer?
- Give each kid a copy of the Prayer Palms activity page, a marker and a pair of scissors
- Instruct the kids to spread out
- Direct the kids to cut out the palm branches on the activity page
- Invite the kids write down different things they want to pray about on the fronds of the leaf
  - Share that their prayers can be about anything. They can write down prayers for themselves or other people. They can write things they want to thank God for
  - Remind kids that prayer is simply a conversation with God, and they can talk about anything
- After kids have finished working on their Prayer Palms, encourage them to take them home to use as a reminder to pray in the days ahead

- Remind the kids the palm branch can be a symbol of the promises kept by God, which reminds us that God loves us
- Close your group time in prayer

*As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show the adults their “Prayer Palms”. Invite kids to explain what the importance of prayer is all about.*