

# 10 Days of the Easter Story

A Family Experience Through  
the Feelings of Holy Week

Dr. Josh and Christi Straub    Illustrated by Angelika Scudamore

# Introduction

**T**he resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most remarkable miracle in history. He conquered death so we, too, will be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:20–22). But the events leading up to Jesus' death were incredibly emotional for His family, disciples, and all who followed Him.

One way we can connect modern-day children to the two-thousand-year-old stories of Jesus is to help them understand the emotions surrounding Holy Week. We can ask them to imagine what they might feel if put in that moment in history.

This is the heart behind *10 Days of the Easter Story*: to introduce your children to the people, events, and feelings from the Triumphal Entry all the way to the ascension. To bring the Easter story alive so children will know they're not alone in their feelings. To realize that we have a Lord who understands our joys and sorrows (Hebrews 4:15).

## Why Feelings?

We all have God-given emotions. But our feelings will eventually control our behavior if we deny or suppress them. That's why we must acknowledge what we are feeling, name our emotions, and respond—not react—to them. Teaching our kids to filter their feelings through the lens of the biblical narrative—the active and alive Word of God—has the power to shape their hearts.

Our hope is that your child relates to the characters in the Easter story and *feels* the significance of the moment. These events of Holy Week are not only historical, but they are also transformational and have the power to change hearts.

## How to Read *10 Days of the Easter Story*

We suggest you begin reading on Palm Sunday. The “*10 Days*” refers more to the time your family will spend with the story than to the chronological events of the biblical account. Not everyone agrees on the exact chronological order of events of Holy Week, but we held to the general timeline.

This book is designed for families with children ages four to ten, but please tailor the stories, activities, and experiences to fit your kids and your schedule. We include pages to record memories and to answer the Family Time Questions so this book can become a keepsake to experience together each Easter.

May these stories prepare your family's hearts to experience Jesus' resurrection, and may the memories bring you joy for years to come. Happy Easter!

**Josh and Christi**

# Timeline of the Holy Week



Day 1  
The Triumphal Entry  
**Happiness**  
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Day 2  
The Temple  
**Anger**  
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Day 3  
The Anointing at Bethany  
**Gratitude**  
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Day 4  
The Last Supper  
**Surprise**  
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Day 7  
The Unknown  
**Fear**  
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Day 6  
The Crucifixion  
**Sadness**  
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Day 5  
The Betrayal  
**Disgust**  
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Day 8  
The Resurrection  
**Joy**  
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Day 9  
Peter's Restoration  
**Remorse**  
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Day 10  
The Disciples' Call  
**Bravery**  
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Day 1  
Feeling:  
**Happiness**

The whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.”

—Luke 19:37–38



# The Triumphal Entry

Read Matthew 21:1–11.

The Triumphal Entry is when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey as people happily waved palm branches and shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel.”

Welcome to Day 1 of the Easter story! On this day, Jesus took a journey called the Triumphal Entry. He rode a foal (a young donkey that had never been ridden before) into Jerusalem (Zechariah 9:9). For those who recognized Jesus as the Messiah, this was a day of happiness!

The Triumphal Entry was on the first day of Passover, a Jewish celebration of when God had rescued the Israelites from Egyptian slavery hundreds and hundreds of years earlier. The Jewish people were now under the control of the powerful and cruel Roman Empire. The people thought Jesus, who they saw as the coming King, would finally rescue them again, this time from the Romans.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, “the whole crowd of disciples began to praise God joyfully.” They shouted “Hosanna!” which means “Save us!” And they said, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel” (Luke 19:37; John 12:13).

As a sign of victory, the crowd placed palm branches on the ground in front of Jesus. Not everybody believed He was the Messiah. But His disciples saw Jesus as their victorious King and were happy He had come to save them. They didn’t understand that Jesus hadn’t come to defeat the Romans; He had come to triumph over sin and Satan and death so we all might be saved and live with God. That was the real triumph brought by this King.

## Happiness and the Triumphal Entry

The week leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus was named *Holy Week* by the church. Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week. It is a happy day for those who believe in Jesus—a day we celebrate Jesus' triumph over sin and death.

But not everyone was happy on the first Palm Sunday. The Pharisees, kind of like Christmas grinchies, tried to shut down the happiness, asking Jesus to scold His disciples for their loud praise. But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if they were to keep silent, the stones would cry out" (Luke 19:40). How cool is that? All of creation is made to worship God! On Palm Sunday, people were happy to worship and welcome their long-awaited King.

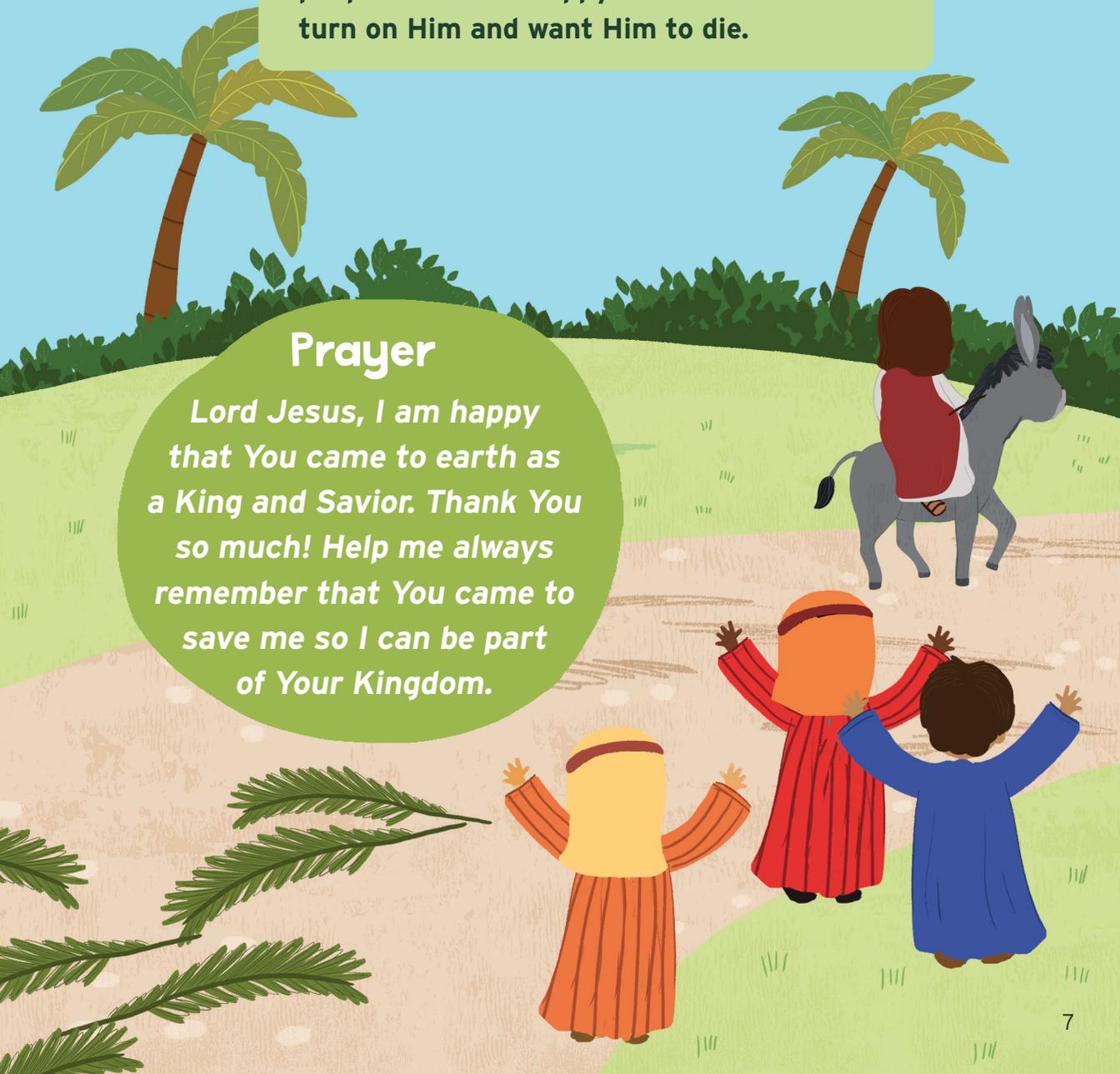


# Happiness

Happiness is a feeling, so it comes and goes based on what's happening in our lives. If circumstances change, we may no longer be happy. Unfortunately, just a few short days after the Triumphal Entry, even some of the people who were happy about Jesus would turn on Him and want Him to die.

## Prayer

*Lord Jesus, I am happy that You came to earth as a King and Savior. Thank You so much! Help me always remember that You came to save me so I can be part of Your Kingdom.*





## Family Time Questions

1. Imagine you were there the day Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem. Where do you picture yourself in the story?

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2. What would you be feeling as you saw Jesus riding in front of you on the path?

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3. Why do you think the Pharisees weren't happy?

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4. Was there ever a time in your life you were happy one day and not so happy the next? What changed?

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5. Is there anything you'd like to say to Jesus right now? Put your words into a prayer to Him.

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## Family Activity

### The Happiness Ball

Get a colorful beach ball. On each of the colors of the ball, use a marker to write a phrase. For instance, you could write prompts like:

- Tell about a time when you felt happy.
- Show everyone how you express happiness on the outside.
- Sing a song that makes you happy.
- What do Mom and Dad look like when they are happy?
- Name one thing you feel in your body when you are happy.
- Tell about a time when you got angry with someone but the anger quickly went away because you laughed together.
- Tell about a time someone spoke about you that made you feel happy. What did they say?
- What makes you happy when you are feeling down?

Feel free to make up your own prompts to get your kids talking. As they throw the ball to each other, they answer the prompt closest to their right pointer finger.

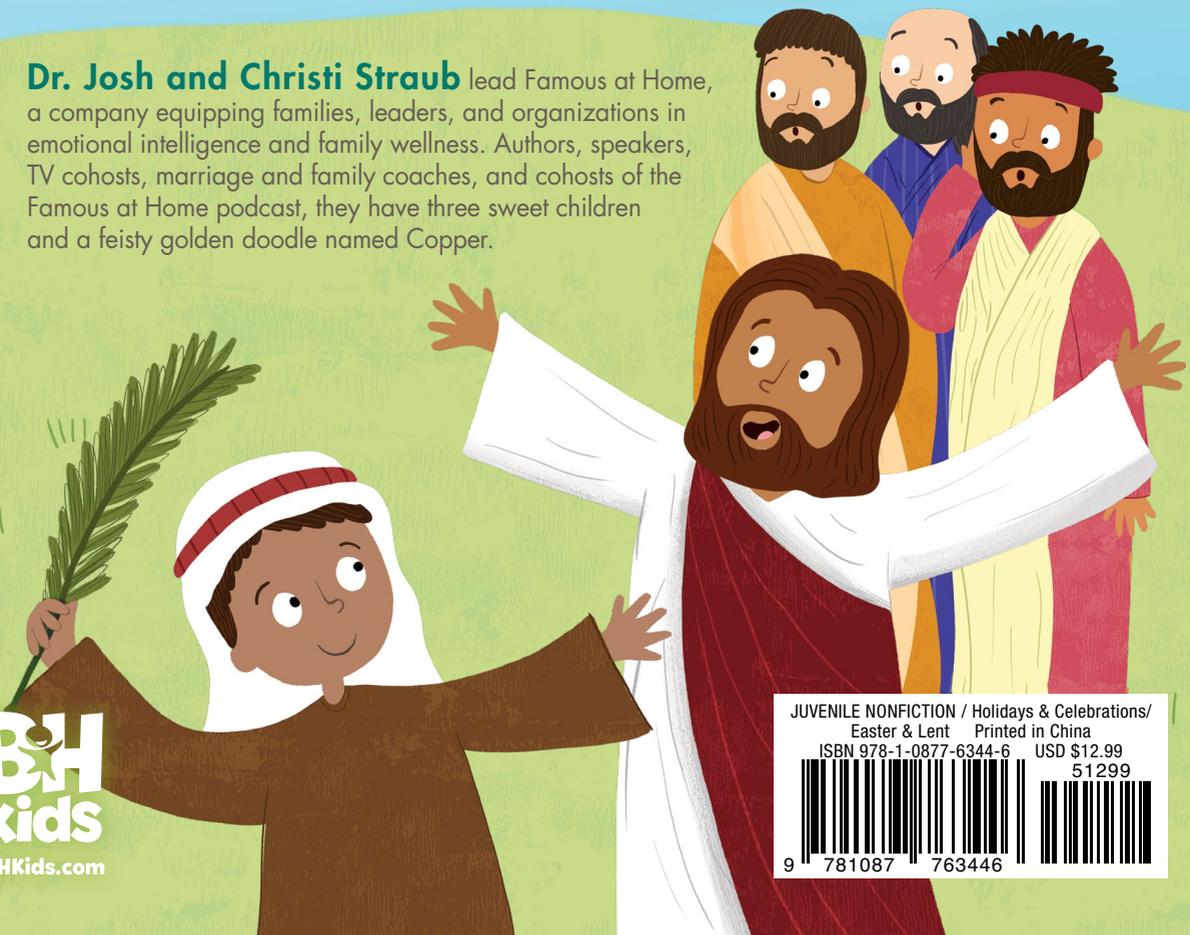


# Experience the Easter story in a whole new way!

The happiness on Palm Sunday, the surprise at the Last Supper, the sadness at the cross, the joy at the tomb—the week of Jesus' death and resurrection was filled with emotion. In *10 Days of the Easter Story*, your family will journey through the key moments of Holy Week by encountering the emotions people felt during the week that changed the world.

Each day offers a retelling of the biblical story, a prayer, family-time questions, and an exploration of that day's emotion. With ideas for activities and pages to record family responses, this book will become a keepsake to be used year after year. Gather your family to celebrate the full emotions and glory of Easter!

**Dr. Josh and Christi Straub** lead Famous at Home, a company equipping families, leaders, and organizations in emotional intelligence and family wellness. Authors, speakers, TV cohosts, marriage and family coaches, and cohosts of the Famous at Home podcast, they have three sweet children and a feisty golden doodle named Copper.



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